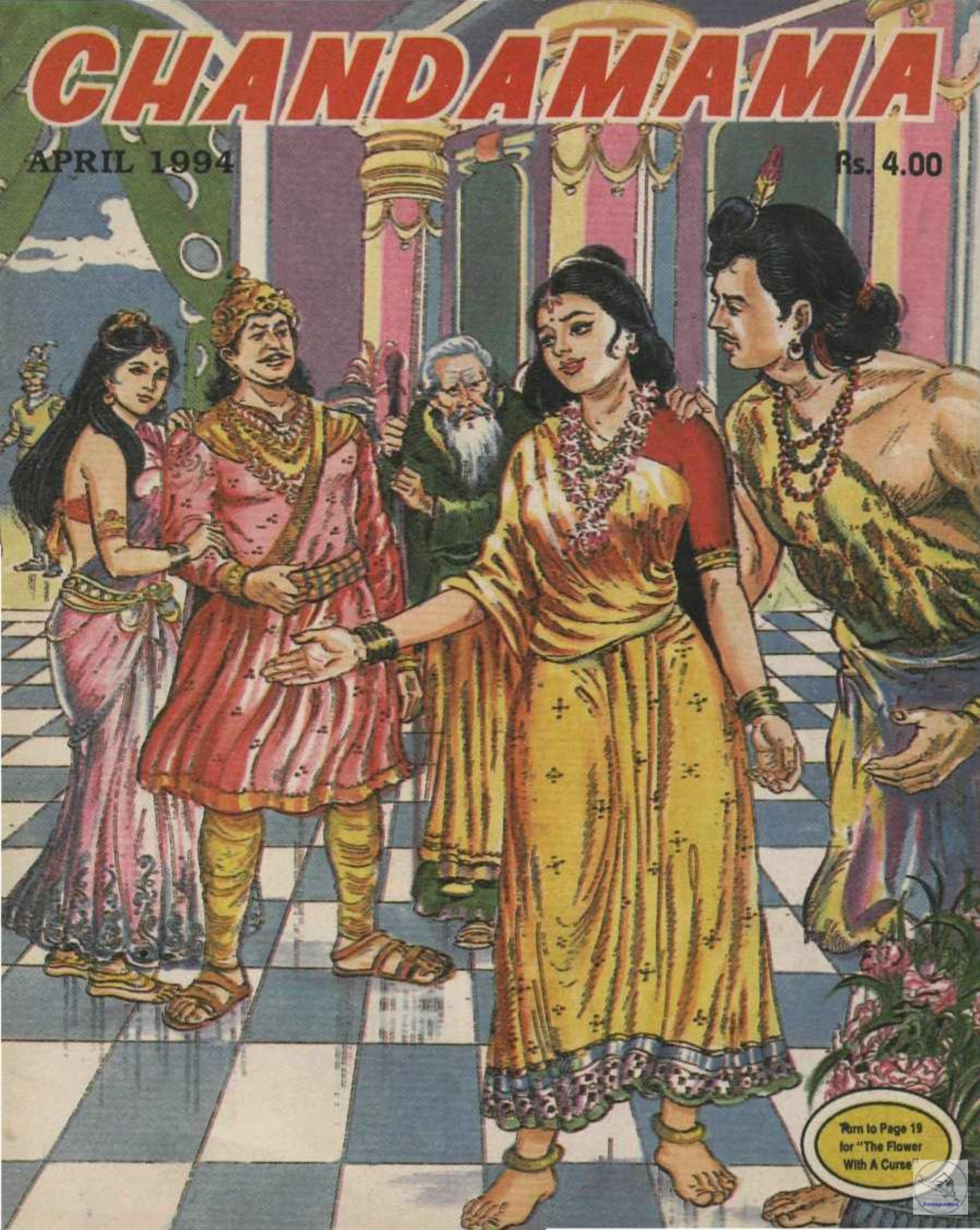


CHANDAMAMA

APRIL 1994

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Turn to Page 19
for "The Flower
With A Curse"



What a miracle!

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A VERY SHORT CREATURE APPEARED FROM IT AND ASKED SONU...



BEFORE SONU REALISED, HE HAD AGREED.



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A	X	S	M	A	R	U	T	I				
C	F	H	Y	T	C	D	G	D				
D	S					G	X	Y	U	W	N	O
R	F					F	E	R	R	A	R	I
D	G	C	C	U	E	K	I	O				
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G	Y					Q	R	D	U	J	W	W
U	K					H	O	T	R	O	D	V
A	G	V	T	B	Y	X	G				I	
R	O	D	Z	I	L	L	A				H	
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			D	U	M	P	T	R	U	C	K	

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CHANDAMAMA

IN THIS ISSUE

Vol. 24 April 1994 No. 10

Stories

Character Certificate Page 11
Flower With A Curse - 13	.... Page 19
Sure Cure	.... Page 30
The Modified Horse	.... Page 37
A Mahout As Monarch	.... Page 41
Veer Hanuman-43	.... Page 47
The Rare Veena	.... Page 58

Picture Stories :

Panchatantra-40	.... Page 14
The Kid And The Little Tramp	.... Page 29

Features :

Political Recognition	
To Peasants	.... Page 8
Mother Earth	.... Page 13
Supplement-66	.... Page 33
World of Nature	.... Page 55
Sports Snippets	.... Page 56

**And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!**

NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 24 MAY 1994 No. 11

KEERTHISIMHA: The new serial, which centres round a pearl necklace with miraculous powers, starts as Prince Keerthivarma of Kosala is on his way back from the *gurukul* where his father, Sushena, had sent him for his education. The king's bosom friend, Jayasena, is always praising daughter Keerthisena's capabilities. The king gives her a test: can she divert the prince from his route to the palace? Though intrigued, Jayasena is certain that Sushena will have some motive to give her such a test. He unfolds the story of their friendship to his daughter.

VEER HANUMAN: The Aswamedha *yaga* horse has been detained by the King of Manipuri. At the bidding of Rama, Hanuman flies to Manipuri to help Bharata, Lakshmana, and Shatrughna release the horse. It may not be that easy to overpower King Manidhwaja, who has accumulated boons after boons from Lord Siva himself. He is now invincible, but is bothered by the weapons directed at him by the three brothers. Manidhwaja prays to Siva and gets the Lord's trident, and aims it at Lakshmana. Hanuman halts its flight and enlarges his chest to reveal Siva's presence in him.

PLUS your favourite features **PANCHATANTRA** and **CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT**.

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Controlling Editor :
NAGI REDDI



Founder :
CHAKRAPANI

Education for all

As we go to press, the State Chief Ministers are in Delhi attending a meeting to discuss how best the recommendations of the nine-nation summit on education, held in December, can be implemented.

India had taken the initiative to convene a summit of nine most populous countries in the world—Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, besides India. The main theme of this summit was "Education for all", to decide how by the turn of the century, every child in these nine countries can be given education.

There was complete agreement on this very laudable objective. It was decided that the highest priority would be given to development of the human being, that a growing share of the national resources would be set apart for imparting basic education.

The crunch was: where would the money come from? Every one of the nine nations felt that their people cannot be taxed any more for purposes of promoting education. That means, they will have to depend on outside agencies—mostly such financial organisations as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Now, these agencies have stipulated certain conditions—that some resources should be generated internally and that there should also be a ceiling. The Delhi Declaration, appealed to the agencies to relax these constraints.

As far as India is concerned, what the Chief Ministers will decide is going to be important for the future of education. They have also to take into consideration how schools can attract children and keep them from morning till evening—after spending millions of rupees on universal primary education.

Political Recognition to Peasants



When the New Year was greeted with hopes of peace, prosperity, and happiness by people in most parts of the world, Mexico witnessed a peasant uprising described as the most violent in 20 years.

"We have just about nothing! No decent home to live in, no piece of land we can call our own, no employment, no education, and no health! We are fully justified in declaring a war on the government. That is our last resort!" thundered the guerrilla leader, Commandant Marcos of the self-styled Zapatista National Liberation Army, which spearheaded the revolt. The

guerrillas claim to have derived inspiration from the revolutionary hero of the powerful agrarian revolt of 1910, Emiliano Zapata.

The scene of the uprising was Chiapas, one of the poorest provinces in south Mexico. The region has for long been suffering from the autocratic administration of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party which had of late colluded with the rich estate owners there. These coffee growers, in conspiracy with the Forest officials, had managed to usurp most of the lands that once belonged to the descendants of the ancient Mayas and the original Amerindian inhabitants. The peasants were being paid only a pittance for their produce which they were forced to sell to the estate owners who even went to the extreme of doing away with anybody who protested. There were instances when lands as large as 1,000 acres were grabbed by force.

In several cases, the administration abetted with the landlords by clapping the protestors in prison. A revolt was thus simmering in the region.

The immediate provocation for a flare-up was the signing of the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) between the U.S.A., Canada, and Mexico, which was to come into effect from January 1. The peasants feared that it might result in an influx from the U.S.A. of cheap products, besides the stock of maize and other agriculture produce, a glut of which the U.S.A. was experiencing.

Nearly 2,000 peasant-guerrillas captured the hilly towns of San Cristobal, Delas Casas, Okosingo, Margerittas, and Ultra Marino, and held them for three days. Some 300 guerrillas stormed the Municipal office in San Cristobal and destroyed furniture, files, and computers. In the other places, government offices and buildings faced their fury. They also managed to free nearly 180 prisoners from the military prison.

The Mexican army attacked the guerrillas from the air, and chased them from behind in armoured vehicles, pushing them back to the forests before a week had passed. Apprehending reprisal, thousands of people in these towns fled their homes and hearth. Nearly 200 guerrillas lost their lives in bombings and gunfire.

The government pointed an accusing finger at the Roman Catholic Bishop Samuel Ruis. The Bishop, however, denied any hand of the church in the rebellion, but warned the government against the injustice meted out to the peasants. He told the government that it could not deny them their right to live.

The ruling party, which has been in power for 70 years at one stretch, has come to the conclusion that the government can no longer ignore the problems of the peasants. It has offered a ceasefire and amnesty to the fighters. As a first step to end the confrontation, it has announced its readiness to recognise the Zapatista Army as a political factor to initiate dialogues. It is not ruled out that the next general elections in August this year will see multi-party contests.

MEXICO: History in a Nutshell

- World's largest Spanish-speaking nation
- Maya Indian empires till the 16th century
- A Spanish colony between 1520 and 1820
- Gains independence from Spain in 1821
- At war with the U.S.A. 1846-48
- Maya Indian revolt suppressed in 1848
- Agrarian revolt led by Zapata in 1910
- New constitution introduced in 1917—start of modern era
- Institutional Revolutionary Party comes to power in 1920

NEWS FLASH

Parents beware

If a child leaves school without completing his education, it is not the child who is punished, but his parent! No, not in India where primary education has been made compulsory in several States, in some even free. In China where education is both free and compulsory, the parents of a dropout are, under the latest regulation, fined the equivalent of Rs. 100 to Rs. 1,70,000, according to the class in which the child has been studying— the higher the class the heavier the fine! A child is put to school when he is six years old, and he is expected to complete his secondary education within the next nine years. In capital Beijing, 99.98 per cent of children attend school.

Piggy bank saves mother

This happened in Sapporo, a town in northern Japan. On hearing a knock, a woman opened the front door. In walked a man holding a threatening knife and asking her to part with all the money she had.



Before she could recover from the shock, her nine-year-old daughter asked him to hold his knife, went inside, picked up her piggy bank, and emptied its contents in front of him. He counted 17,000 yen (nearly

Rs. 4,500) – all her life's savings. He snatched the money and disappeared.

Small is beautiful

A woman in Fort Lauderdale, in Florida, U.S.A., faced a threat to her life as her leg injury had turned septic. She had to be rushed to hospital. It was not so easy to take her out of her house, for, she was a huge 320 kg. (700 lb) figure and the front door was not large enough to let her out. The rescuers had no other option than to break down the wall of her apartment. Some ten people worked on it for one whole hour before she could be put on an ambulance! Did someone say 'small is beautiful'?

Thirty-year-old toy

The Second World War came to an end in 1945, soon after the U.S.A. dropped atom bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The American soldiers were popularly called GIs. In 1964, a toy firm made a doll, naming it GI Joe. It immediately caught the fancy of millions of boys for their war games. The toy continued to be manufactured for 30 years. On February 7, the company held a 'birthday



party' with a fanfare fit for a real-life war hero. The invitees were greeted by an 18 metre (60ft) high inflatable GI Joe. The firm is reported to have sold 220,000,000 dolls since 1964. More than 60 per cent of boys in the U.S.A. possess a GI Joe.



Character Certificate

Kumar was the son of a farmer. He approached Ramanath, a rich trader, who was looking for an assistant. He told Kumar he would give him a job provided he gave a security deposit of a thousand rupees. "Alternatively, you may ask four prominent persons to stand surety for you. I'm wary of employing strangers," he told Kumar point-blank.

"All right," agreed Kumar. "If you'll go with me in the evening after you close your shop, I shall get you a thousand rupees or four sureties."

Late in the evening, Kumar took Ramanath to moneylender Vairabh. He told the moneylender the purpose of his visit. "Kumar, you're honest and good," said Vairabh in the presence of Ramanath. "You're not given to telling lies. All this I know well, and I know for certain, too.

But, I can't give you a loan. How'll you return the amount? I know your financial status. So, please don't press me for a loan."

Kumar then took Ramanath to Muthuswami, who was a prominent figure of that town. He listened to the youngster's pleas. "I know you even from your childhood; you're also the son of my best friend. You don't quarrel with others for anything and everything; you're also honest. But all that will not prompt me to give you a thousand rupees—as a loan or a gift. I hope you won't insist or bother me again and again."

Kumar's next visit was to the village chief Manikyam. "Look here! I know everybody in your family, Kumar. I also know you well—that you're clever, competent, honest, and won't cheat. But all that will not be sufficient for me to stand surety for you, my boy!"



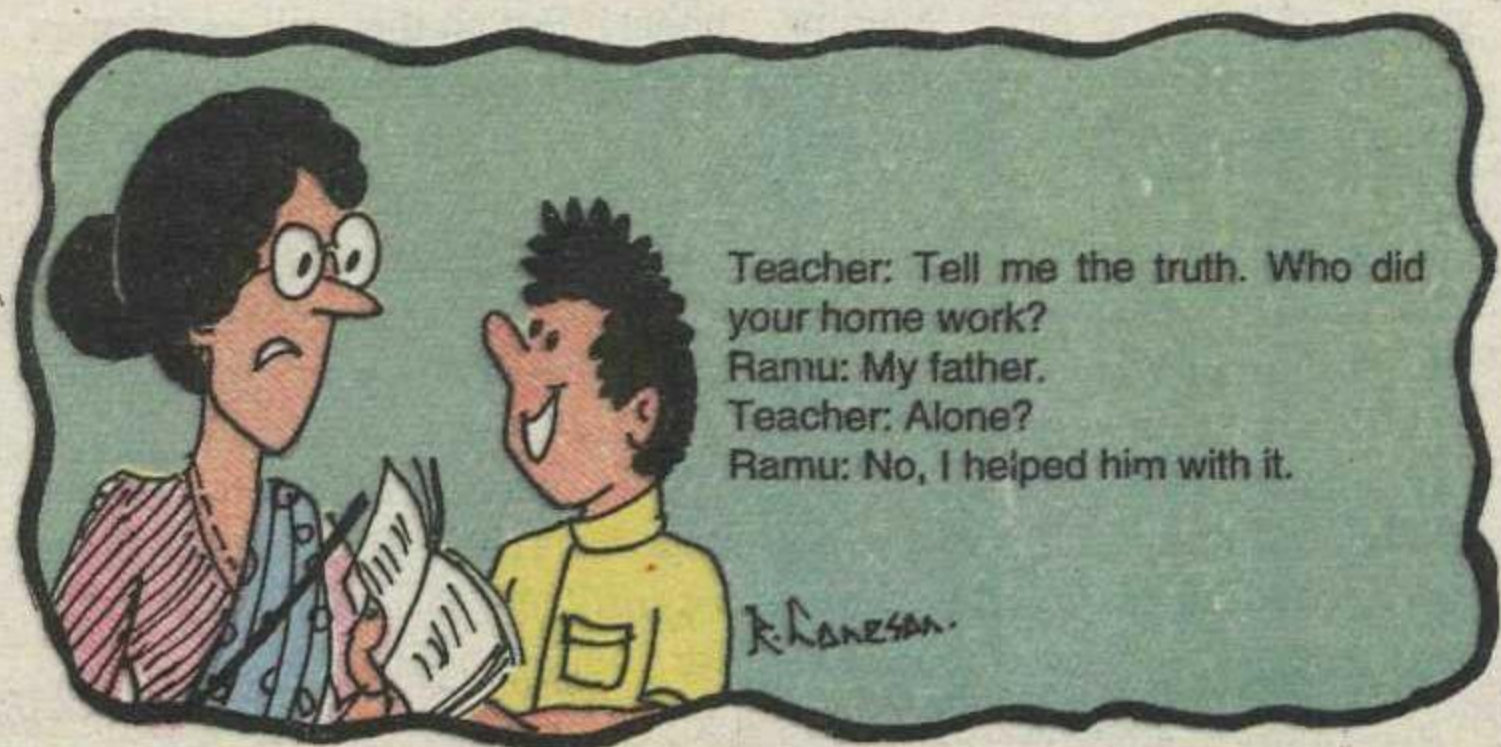


Kumar was disappointed. He came out and told Ramanath, "See how difficult it is to get a loan. It's all my misfortune!"

"Don't worry, Kumar," Ramanath consoled him. "The certificates of surety I wanted you to get me, I've already received. I don't need them in writing any longer. I've heard all of them describing you and your honesty. That's more than sufficient. You may

join my company tomorrow."

Kumar was happy. Though no one was willing to give him a loan of a thousand rupees, it was not a reflection on his character. They did not want to help him with money. At the same time, they all spoke highly of his character. That was enough for Ramanath to assess Kumar. More than a surety certificate, what he wanted was a character certificate.



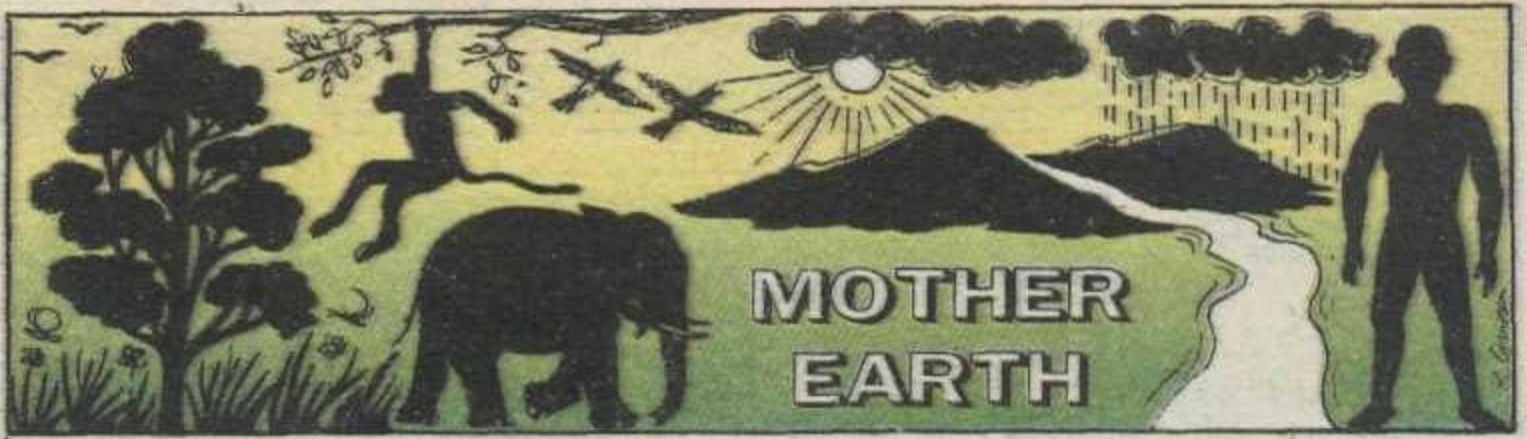
Teacher: Tell me the truth. Who did your home work?

Ramu: My father.

Teacher: Alone?

Ramu: No, I helped him with it.

R. RAMESH.



NATURE'S BALANCE

Because man is more powerful, more intelligent, and more crafty than the other creatures on the earth, he can destroy them at his sweet will. But he must think twice before taking up his gun.

Some years ago, a national institute of technology was founded on the outskirts of a city. A colony grew up. It housed not only students but also engineers and professors. The latter occupied newly built bungalows with their families.

But at night, their sleep was often disturbed by the barking of dogs.

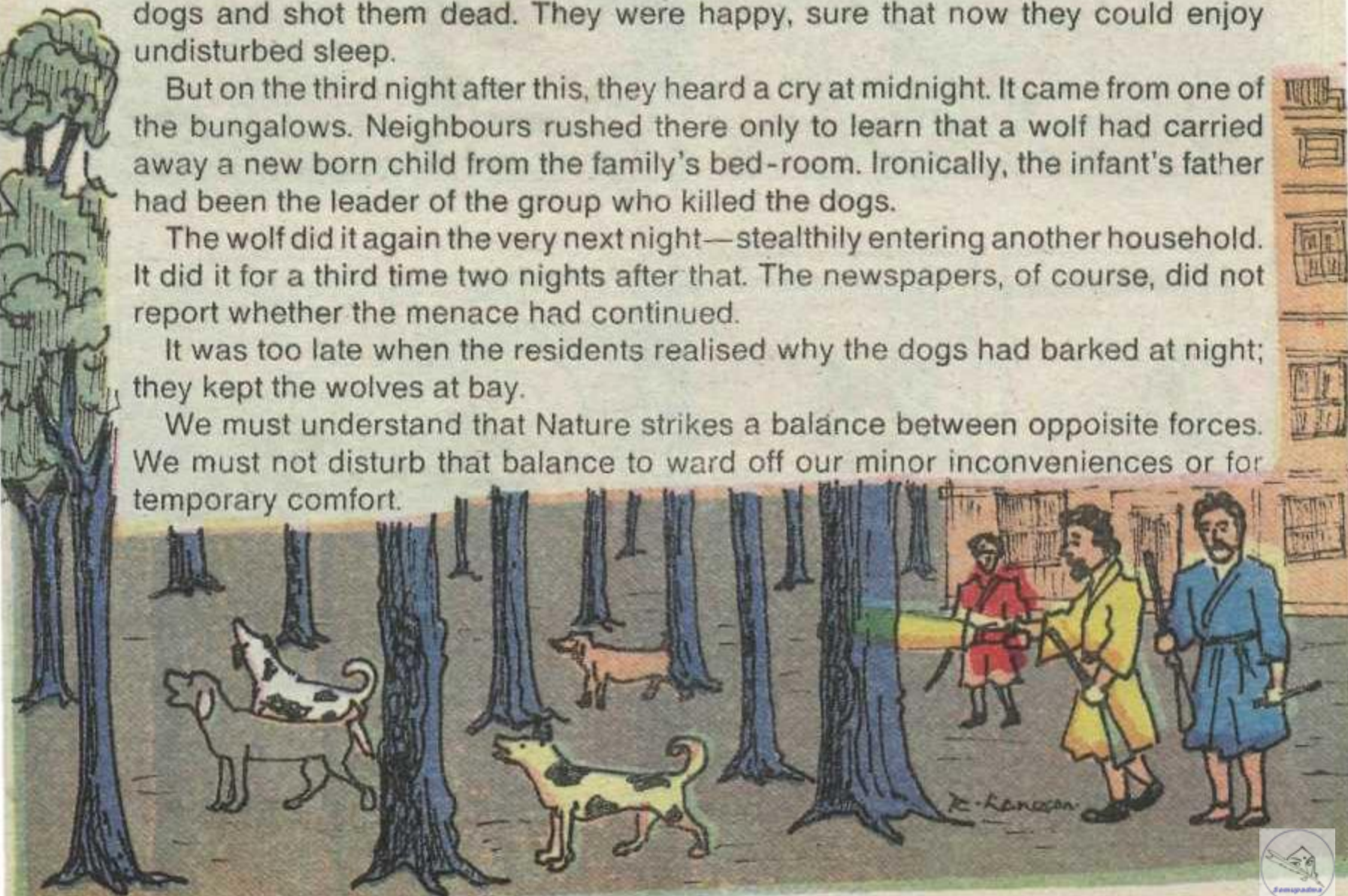
One night, some of the angry residents took out their guns and ran behind the dogs and shot them dead. They were happy, sure that now they could enjoy undisturbed sleep.

But on the third night after this, they heard a cry at midnight. It came from one of the bungalows. Neighbours rushed there only to learn that a wolf had carried away a new born child from the family's bed-room. Ironically, the infant's father had been the leader of the group who killed the dogs.

The wolf did it again the very next night—stealthily entering another household. It did it for a third time two nights after that. The newspapers, of course, did not report whether the menace had continued.

It was too late when the residents realised why the dogs had barked at night; they kept the wolves at bay.

We must understand that Nature strikes a balance between opposite forces. We must not disturb that balance to ward off our minor inconveniences or for temporary comfort.



RAKTAKSHA AND HIS FOLLOWERS LEAVE THE FORTRESS OF UPAMARDA THE KING OF OWLS.



GOOD THING THAT RAKTAKSHA LEFT THE FORTRESS. HE ALONE IS SHREWD AMONG THE OWLS.



A KING MUST HAVE COUNSELLORS, OTHERWISE HIS DOWNFALL IS CERTAIN.



AFTER RAKTAKSHA'S DEPARTURE, THE OLD CROW COLLECTS WOOD FROM THE FOREST EVERY DAY.



WHY DO YOU PILE UP THESE PIECES OF WOOD HERE?

TO BUILD MY OWN DWELLING.



HOW EASY IT IS TO DECEIVE THESE FOOLS! AHHA! HAHAI



AFTER SOME TIME...

I'VE GATHERED ENOUGH WOOD TO DESTROY THE ENEMY.



IT IS DAYTIME AND THE OWLS ARE BLIND...



I'LL FLY TO MY KING AND TELL HIM EVERYTHING IS READY.



IN THE PRESENCE OF MEGHAVARNA, THE KING OF CROWS...



O KING! NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT. BRING LIGHTED TORCHES AND FOLLOW ME TO THE FORTRESS OF THE OWLS.



That is virtue which every one ought to do; and that is vice which every one should shun.

—Thirukkural



The great will do those things which are difficult to be done; while those mean cannot do them.

THUS THE OWLS PERISH IN THE FIRE, AND THEIR FORTRESS IS BURN'T TO ASHES.



MEGHAVARNA AND HIS RETINUE RETURN AT LAST TO THEIR OLD ABODE, THE BANYAN TREE.



O! WISE ONE, NOW WE'D LIKE TO HEAR HOW YOU ACHIEVED THIS MAGNIFICENT SUCCESS.

FIRST LET ME THANK YOU SIRI, BUT FOR YOU, THIS SUCCESS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE.



O! KING, LISTEN CAREFULLY! ONE MUST BE VERY CAUTIOUS AND EVER ALERT AMONG ENEMIES.

HE MUST BIDE HIS TIME PATIENTLY. PLAN EFFICIENTLY AND THEN STRIKE SWIFTLY.



EVEN THE INVINCIBLE PANDAVAS HAD TO LIVE IN DISGUISE FOR SOME TIME.



LIVING IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP IS LIKE WALKING ON THE EDGE OF A SWORD!



BUT ALL THE OWLS WERE FOOLS, EXCEPT RAK-TAKSHA, WHO LEFT THE KING.



TH. I PAID HEAVILY FOR TRUSTING AN ENEMY AND A STRANGER. THIS REMINDS ME OF THE FROGS WHO TRUSTED MAHDAVISHA THE SNAKE.



PRAY, TELL US THAT STORY, SIRI!

From propriety of conduct, people obtain greatness; from impropriety springs insufferable disgrace.



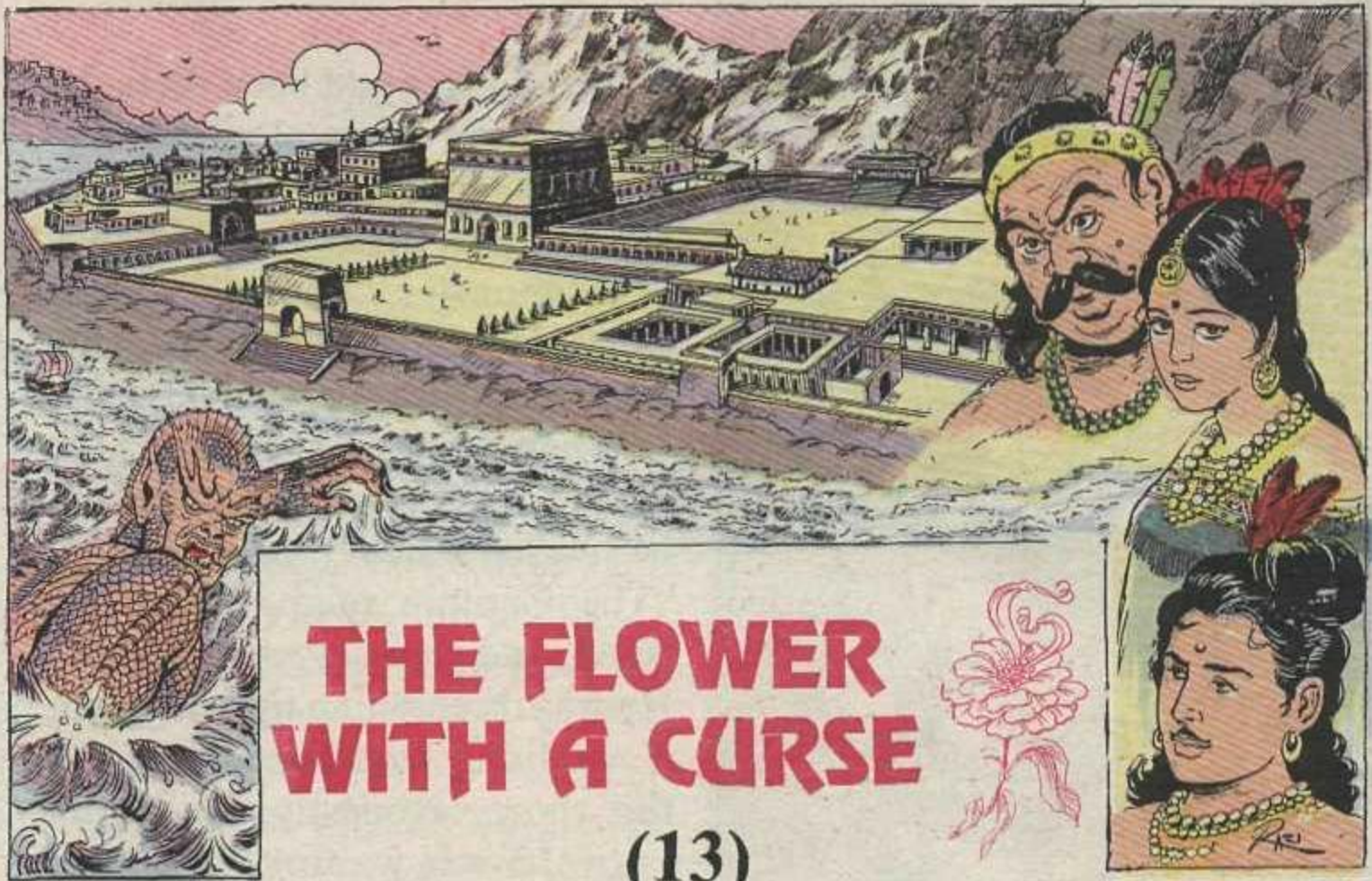
Do not desire the gain of greed; there is no glory in the enjoyment of its fruits.

Game which fools play

The college day celebrations were fast approaching. The Principal made a checklist and began allocating duties and responsibilities to the senior students. Anshuman was good at debates, so he chose him for the welcome speech. But the youngster wanted a role in the drama. The English professor in charge of the drama had already allotted the roles, and Anshuman found himself left out. When he met his friend Asima Sahoo (of Dhenkanal), he poured out his disappointment. Asima tried to console him by pointing out that he would be making the very first speech and all eyes would be on him. "It's a mug's game!" he exclaimed, as he hurried to his classroom, leaving Asima bewildered by his remark. Mug? Beer mug? She wondered whether her friend had taken to drinks to drown his disappointment. When she expressed her fear to her elder brother, he laughed and called her a 'mug', and went on to explain that a mug is a simpleton and a mug's game is something only fools will do—an activity from which a person does not get any satisfaction.

Reader P. Hari Kishan of Anantapur asks: What is meant by absolute zero? It is a term used in physics for referring to the lowest possible temperature, or what is described as the zero of the absolute scale of temperature—which is approximately minus 273 Celsius.





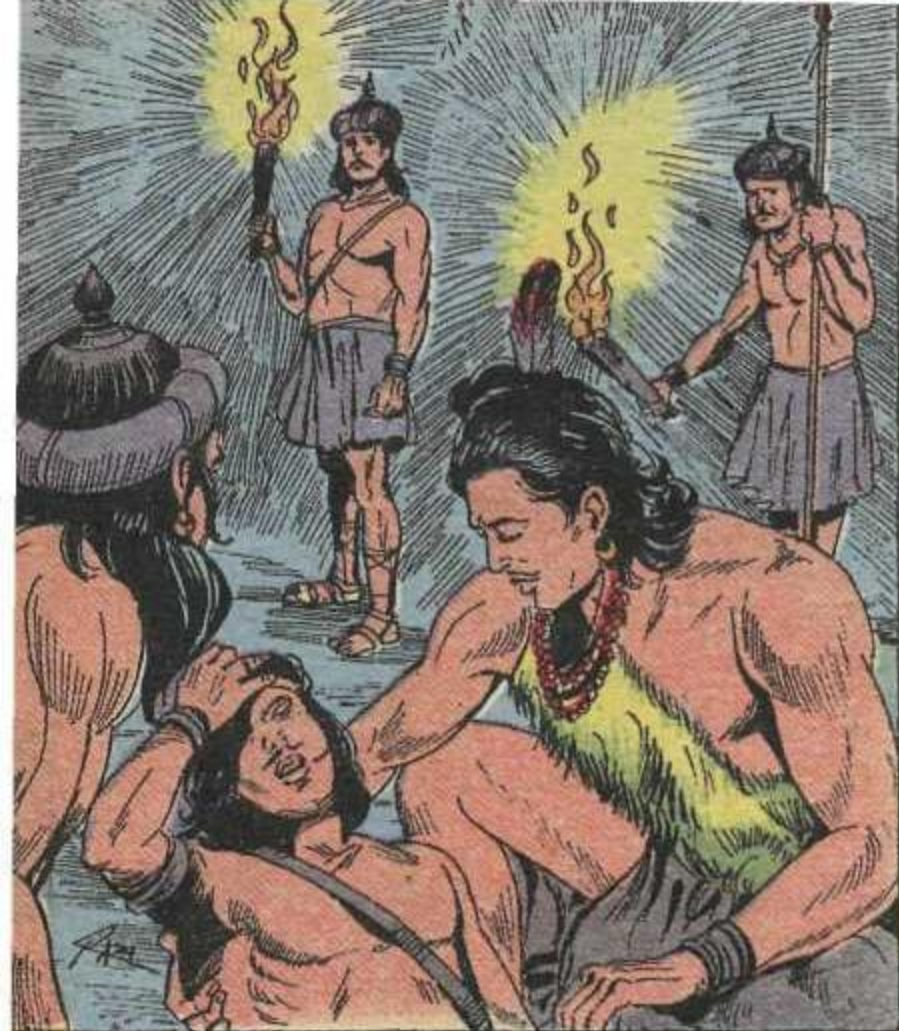
(In Maninagar, everybody is anxiously awaiting Thangal. His sister, Laisna, nourishes fears about his safe return. After all, the brave tribal youth has gone alone into the sea to entice the monster and lead him far far away so that he will never come back to Maninagar. Princess Priyamvada reassures her that Thangal will come back safe and successful. The two are not aware how he has escaped—not from the monster, but from a mortal with some monstrous ambition. King Mahendra Singh desires that Thangal joins the Nagapura army. But he is keen to return to his people. He bids farewell to Nagapura and is sent back with an escort. A surprise awaits him in Maninagar.)

After King Mahendra Singh, Commander Arjun Singh, and Chieftain Kabui left for the city and palace, Thangal and three soldiers, who had been asked to accompany him, climbed down the cliffs and repaired to the beach. Along with the few soldiers who were already there, they kept a vigil for any

survivors from the two boats toppled by the monster. For a long time there was no trace of any survivors.

In the sound of violent waves striking against the rocks, they were unable to hear any human voices. So, when Thangal saw someone trying to find his feet and stand up in the water, he

A SURPRISE BACK HOME



jumped into the sea and waded to the man and held him by the waist. Together they slowly made their way to the shore. Thangal found the man completely exhausted. He made him lie down on the sand and rubbed his arms and palms to give him some warmth. He began massaging the man's legs and feet. As a result, he soon opened his eyes and looked around.

A thin smile came over his lips. "Oh god!" he exclaimed, as he sat up on the sand. "Is that giant around still?" He seemed to have realised the folly of his question.

If the monster had been there, he would have been alone; everybody else would have either run away or met his end at the hands of the monster. "That was a close shave! Has anybody else from the boat come? Captain.."

When he saw Thangal and the other soldier shaking their head, he heaved a heavy sigh of relief. "The Captain might have perished, and that serves him right. He was threatening us with death if we didn't lead the monster to the shore. Honestly, we didn't know he was waiting..... waiting for a monster! He was all along promising us gifts and riches once he became king; how, we didn't know As if that giant would have anointed him king! When he emerged from the sea so suddenly, we were at our wit's end. The Captain grabbed one bunch of flowers and threw at him. The next moment we saw the monster closing in on us and he almost had his huge hands on our boats. That's when he was hit by your torches. We, too, were blinded and could not see what was happening. The next moment he had come up from beneath the boats and we also



rose to his height before we were dumped in the sea—boats, soldiers, flowers, everything. When I surfaced, I had only one thought—to save myself!”

“If you hadn’t returned, we would never have known what took place after the Captain pushed me out of the boat!” said Thangal, who was still massaging the soldier’s arms and palms.

“Yes, we saw all that from our boats,” remarked the soldier. “That was when we also became apprehensive of the Captain. He rowed the boat to reach us and when he came, he asked one of us to get into his boat and throw the bunches of those flowers into our boats. Afterwards, he and that soldier left their boats and jumped into ours. It was then that he told us all about his plans to become king. We didn’t believe him when he mentioned the monster whom, he said, he would turn into his slave! And when the giant rose in the sea, we knew who would be whose slave! Anyway it’s all a nightmare.”

“Just forget everything for the time being,” said Thangal. “We shall presently go to the Commander and give him all these



details”.

By then they could see the sea around them clearly. “What’s that?” Thangal’s sharp eyes caught something afloat and being brought ashore by the gentle waves. He walked up to the frothy shore. “A body!” he let out a cry. “But how loathsome!”

It had deep and dark wrinkles all over; the face and eyes looked hideous. Thangal noticed the burn marks on the face, shoulders, the chest and at the back. Only a portion of the head had been left intact. “My god! I won’t be surprised if this is the





monster himself! A monster once upon a time!”

It was decided that two soldiers would guard the body till the Commander was informed. So, Thangal, along with the lone survivor and the other soldiers made their way to the capital. One of the soldiers was sent to convey the news to Kabui and to request him to come to the Commander’s residence.

As soon as Thangal was ushered into the presence of Arjun Singh, the Commander asked him, “Has anybody escaped the monster? Any news

of Veerendra Kumar?”

“No, Commander. The Captain has not come back,” said Thangal. “But there is a lone survivor.”

“Come on, let’s go and listen to what he has to say.” Arjun Singh led Thangal to the courtyard.

The soldier repeated all that he had earlier told Thangal. The Commander was not surprised when the soldier described the Captain’s behaviour towards the soldiers. “I won’t say, the king would be happy when he hears this. After all, Veerendra Kumar was the queen’s brother, and our king had tolerated him and his manoeuvres to a great extent,” Arjun Singh commented.

“But, Commander, there is something else that might make the king happy!” interjected Thangal. He then told Arjun Singh about the body that had been washed ashore.

“The way you describe its features,” the Commander agreed with Thangal, “it can only be the body of the monster. The burn marks are evidences of the way he was hit by the torches, which would not have missed their target. He was so huge!”



By then, the Chieftain had joined them. They all went to the palace where King Mahendra Singh listened with rapt attention to the details of the fiery end that met the monster and the suspicion that Captain Veerendra Kumar might have been drowned in the sea when the monster toppled the boats.

The king was found pensive for some time. When he raised his head, his eyes turned to Thangal. "Young man! My kingdom is beholden to you for saving it from a disaster. If you had gone back to Maninagar without completing your mission, who knows what would have befallen on this kingdom, with that accursed flowers lying around! Be that as it may, you have shown us all how brave one can be, especially if one is determined to achieve his aim. You'll be an example to the youth among my subjects. I wish to reward you suitably. Will you join the Nagapura army as Captain?"

"He'll be an asset to our army, Your Majesty," said the Commander. "We'll give him all the training he needs. So far, our tribal population has been fight-



ing shy of joining the army. Thangal will be an example to them, Your Majesty."

Kabui put on a broad smile. "Your Majesty is very kind and gracious. Thangal deserves this honour from you," he said and then addressed himself to the tribal youth. "When my people come to know of you and your bravery, Thangal, they'll make you their hero. I'm sure you'll accept our king's offer and become a leader for all of us."

Thangal was overwhelmed by the king's offer. For some moments, he did not know what





to say or how to respond. "Your Majesty, I'm indeed grateful to you for your extreme kindness. But... but..." he faltered, not knowing how to explain his feeling, "but, Your Majesty will remember that I had left Maninagar on a mission, and now that it has been achieved, I should go back to my country and my people. They must be anxiously waiting for me. I would request you to allow me to get back to Maninagar as quick as possible. Please do not take it as if I am rejecting your offer, but my duty lies with my own country and I

must see how best I can serve Maninagar."

King Mahendra Singh caught hold of his hands. "Thangal, we all appreciate your feelings and admire your loyalty to your country. You shall return to Maninagar—but not in the manner you came here some days ago. You'll go with all honour, escorted by our soldiers."

Chieftain Kabui rose from his seat. "Your Majesty, if you'll permit me, I shall take Thangal with me so that I can introduce him to the youngsters among my own people."

"Yes, Kabui, as you wish. I shall wait for you both tomorrow." said the king.

The scene at the Chieftain's place was a mixture of joy and sorrow—joy because a tribal like them had earned the highest tribute from their ruler; sorrow because Thangal would go back to his own country. As the soldier sent there by Thangal had already given them a graphic account of all that had taken place the previous night and that morning, word had spread and many tribals had assembled waiting for their Chieftain. And



when they saw Thangal with him, their joy knew no bounds.

Kabui told them under what circumstances the king had agreed to Thangal's returning to Maninagar, and asked them to gather at the palace courtyard the next day to give a fitting farewell to Thangal.

When Thangal woke up in the morning, he was greeted by the sight of Chitra watering a plant in the courtyard in front. It was the sapling that he gave her the previous day. When he went near her, she looked at him with wistful eyes. "So, you're going back to Maninagar?"

"Yes, I must go. People are waiting for me there," he replied, though he did not know what exactly she was saying.

"Won't you come back and become Captain?" she asked him.

He caught the word 'captain'. "No, I won't be captain here. I can't!" He supplemented his answer with a shake of his head. He thought he saw tears in her eyes. "Chitra!" He did not say anything more. The girl wiped her tears and ran inside.

Both Kabui and Thangal got ready to proceed to the palace. Thangal bowed to Mai and took

leave of her. "Chitra, you must take care of the sapling." He bowed to her friends who had joined them once again. They all remained at the porch till they lost sight of the two men who were walking fast towards the palace.

At the palace, King Mahendra Singh had been joined by his courtiers, Commander Arjun Singh, Queen Maya Devi and Princess Mallika. Seats were placed near the throne for the Chieftain and Thangal. After they were seated, the Commander got up from his seat and gave a gist of all that had happened in Nagapura for the past few days for the benefit of the courtiers. For many of them, all that came as a surprise. All eyes now turned to Thangal, and he stood up so that everybody could see him properly. He was greeted with cheers.

King Mahendra Singh rose from his throne. "Thangal, we're sending you away with a heavy heart. However, we appreciate your loyalty to your country and admire your determination. I will only repeat my offer and say, if ever you feel free to accept it, we will only be too happy to have



you with us and occupying a position of honour. When you reach Maninagar, convey our fraternal greetings to King Pratapvarma. I am sure he will be proud to have a brave youngster like you among his subjects. God be with you!" The king took off one of his glittering necklaces and put it around his neck. Loud applause reverberated the *darbar* hall. Chieftain Kabui caught the youth in a warm embrace.

Thangal stood before the king and crossed his arms over the chest and took leave of him. He moved over to Queen Maya Devi whom he was seeing for the first time. He first bowed to her and then crossed his arms again. She bade him an affectionate farewell with a gesture of her hand. Thangal crossed over to where Princess Mallika was seated. She rose from her seat. "Thank you for everything. You saved us from a monster! Take care of yourself!" He crossed his arms a third time, and then came to Commander Arjun Singh.

"I wish to tell you that the body of the monster has been buried," said Arjun Singh to the hearing of everybody. "Also that two boatloads of soldiers will escort

you back to Maninagar and see that you reach there safe. They are already at the beach waiting for you. We are requesting Chieftain Kabui to see you off."

Thangal took a glance at everybody and followed Kabui. The courtiers seated on either side rose to bid him farewell. As the two walked towards the beach, followed by some soldiers, Thangal fell silent as he was overcome by emotion.

At the beach, Thangal found that his boat had been decorated with flowers. His look of surprise was greeted by a wide smile from Chitra and her friends. They all held 'Shatabdika' flowers in their hands. "We picked them up from the beach. They had been brought by the sea." She spoke with her hands.

"Give some of them to Princess Mallika, as from me!" said Thangal. He appeared to have forgotten his grief for the time being. He took leave of Kabui, by crossing his arms. The Chieftain caught him in a warm embrace once again and then crossed his arms over his chest. Thangal, helped by two soldiers, pushed his boat into the sea and got into it paddle in hand. One soldier,



too, jumped into it and they both began rowing. As the tide had not started as yet, their progress was not difficult. Before anybody realised it, all three boats had passed through the opening between the cliffs.

The three boats maintained their progress. As he was not alone this time, Thangal found that they were fast approaching land even before the sun had arisen above in the sky. As they went nearer, he recognised the long beach of Maninagar from where he had started. But when was it? He seemed to have lost a count of the days.

But not his sister, Laisna, or Princess Priyamvada. Prompted by her, King Pratapvarma had asked Commander Gambhir Singh to send soldiers to the beach to keep a vigil—in case Thangal were to require some assistance. One of them saw the approaching boats and ran to the Commander to give him the good news—though he was not so sure as to who were in the boats. He was only certain that one of the boats was decorated and there were three men in it.

After sending the same soldier



with a message to the king, Gambhir Singh himself rushed to the beach in time to watch the landing of the boats. They were soon pulled deep into the sand. Thangal turned around to see Commander Gambhir Singh greeting him with a broad smile.

"The monster is dead!" he said simply.

"You mean you *killed* him?" the Commander could not believe his ears.

"No, Sir," said Thangal, shaking his head. "I shall tell you everything as we walk to the palace. How's everybody? How's



my little sister? These people are soldiers from Nagapura, who were sent to escort me."

"They're welcome, too," said the Commander, adding, "everybody has been anxiously awaiting your safe return."

After getting that word of assurance from Gambhir Singh, they both started walking when Thangal also began his narration.

King Pratapvarma, Princess Priyamvada, and Laisna were at the courtyard to greet Thangal. Laisna rushed forward to embrace him. "May goddess Lairembi bless you, my son!" said the king.

"I'm waiting to hear everything from your own mouth." That was how the princess greeted him.

"I've all already sent for Chieftain Khamba, and he should be with us, soon," said King Pratapvarma once they were all seated.

The next day, Rajguru Gournath, too, was present in the court. Thangal had to repeat his narration for the third time! The Rajguru rose in his seat and said: "I won't be surprised if the curse on 'Shatabdika' has been removed with the death of the monster. The flower would bloom in another year!"

"Can we then grow the plant in our garden, father?" asked Priyamvada, eagerly.

"Sure, my child," said King Pratapvarma. "But I've a better gift for you, Priyamvada. The gift of a husband! And who else is more deserving of your hand than Thangal?"

Priyamvada was too coy to give him a reply. She caught hold of Laisna in ecstasy. The girl led the princess to her brother and placed Priyamvada's hands in his.

(Concluded)



LEAVES FROM THE LIVES OF THE
GREAT

The Kid and the Little Tramp



He was known as Charlot in one country, and Carlino in another. One country called him Carlos, in another he was named Carlistos. He had several other names in different countries, but he was born Charles Spencer Chaplin in London on April 16, 1889. The world knew him as Charlie Chaplin, the most famous comedian in movies. The role of a tramp he took in *The Kid* stuck to him, and he was affectionately called 'The Little Tramp'.

His parents were music-hall artistes and invariably poor despite the earnings they made. Always short of money even for essentials, they pushed Charles on to the stage. Before he could properly walk, he was taught to dance! He was only two, but his mother used to praise his 'acting' ability. He was five when, one day, his mother took ill, and Charles was asked to take her place on the stage and

sing. He knew only one song, and he sang it once, twice, a third time, till he was dragged away from the stage.

When their parents separated, Charles and his elder brother, Sid, were sent to an orphanage. They remained there till their mother felt she would be able to take care of them. One day, she was removed to an asylum. The boys were now on their own. Sid took service aboard a ship, and Charles wandered from place to place without a home and a hearth. The life of a vagabond made deep etches in his mind and he was to portray it in *The Kid*.

He slowly worked his way to the stage and took part in some of the popular dramas of those days. Sid had by then left the sea and joined the famous Fred Karno company. He persuaded Charles to join the troupe, and he became its leading comedian. On November 20, 1913, the company was playing in Kansas City, U.S.A. He played his last stage role and the very next day he left for California and movies. One of the most prosperous film companies was Keystone, which offered him a contract to play one of the 'Keystone Cops'—a set of incompetent policemen. Chaplin—now no more Charles—received appreciative comments.

One day, the company sent him to the children's auto race in Venice, outside Los Angeles, with a dummy camera to create laughs as a publicity stunt. For 45 minutes, his acts were filmed for *Kid Auto Races at Venice*. For his act, he wore a pair of huge trousers, size 14 shoes—the right one on his left foot and the left shoe on his right foot—a tight-fitting coat, a bowler hat, a bamboo cane, and a toothbrush moustache. He created such a hilarious scene on the race track that his fame was instant and long-lasting.

He wore the same costume in all the movies in the next 25 years. *The Kid*, released in 1921, was Chaplin's first full-length production. Autobiographical, the film recalled Chaplin's own early life of a tramp.



Sure Cure

King Salwa once had a dream—that he was eating a delicacy given to him by King Nala. When he woke up, Salwa was eager to eat the same delicacy. He thought he would direct the royal cook to prepare it for him. He went to the palace kitchen where he had the surprise of his life. The cook was eating the same delicacy that he had seen only in a dream!

The king stared at the cook for some time. He was perturbed because he feared he might be punished for eating in the presence of the king. He tried to hide the plate in his palms. “What’s that? Give it to me! I want to taste it!” said the king, and he extended his hand.

Now the cook was surprised. What’s this? The king wishes to eat something that he thought was only fit for his consumption! “No, Your Majesty,” he pleaded, “these things are not fit for you. It’s very sour and hot.”

But the king insisted on tasting it. “Nice!” he commented. “It’s very good. You must prepare this item for me once a week.”

That night, Salwa suffered from stomach-ache and he could not get a wink of sleep. He woke up the queen. She thought that her husband was restless because their son, the prince, was proving to be a wayward. “How can one get any sleep?” she wailed. “Look at our son! His behaviour must have upset you very much, my lord. He’s still young. Maybe he’ll reform himself as he grows. Please don’t have any undue worry.”

In fact, the king had no knowledge that the prince was going astray. So, he was shocked as he listened to the queen. The next moment, she went back to sleep. The king thought his stomach-ache had only aggravated. He just waited for the day to break and then sent for the royal

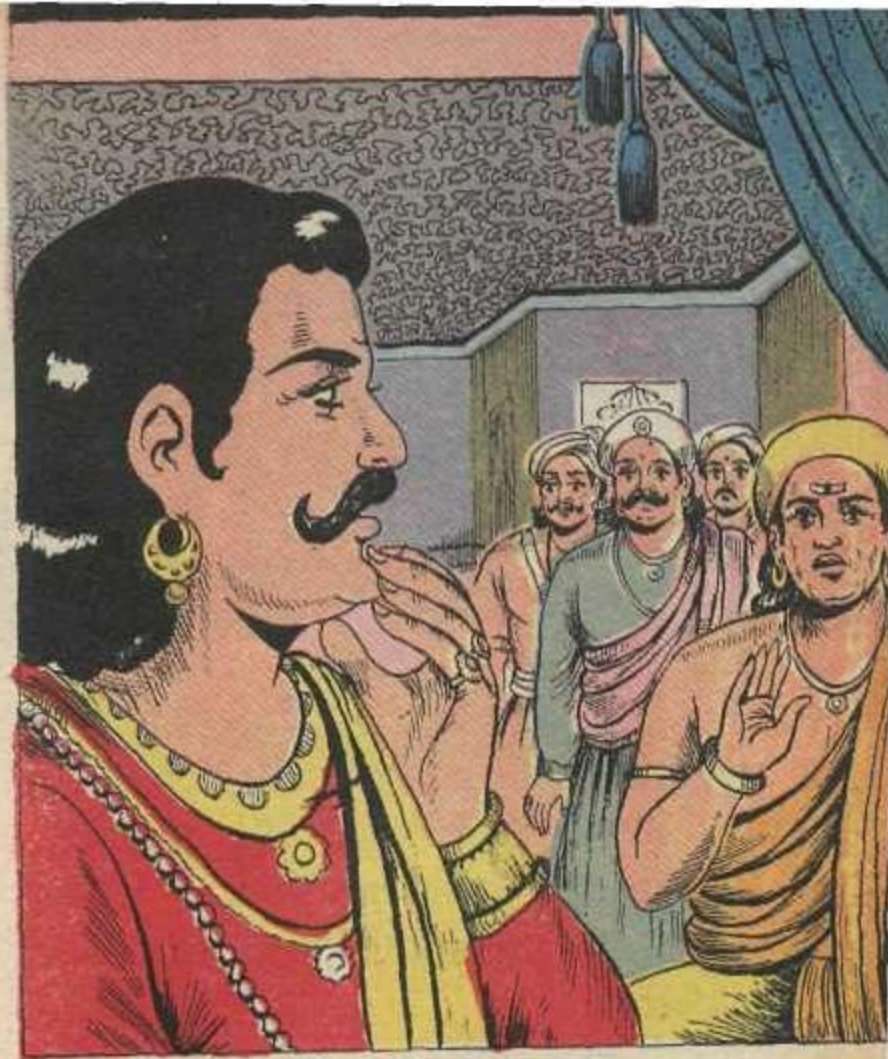
physician.

When he arrived at the palace, the *vaid* examined the king thoroughly. He told the king that there was nothing wrong with him or his stomach. Just then, the official in charge of the royal treasury barged in. "Your Majesty! I heard you had spent a sleepless night. Perhaps you feared that there is no money left in the treasury and the expenditure is mounting. Please don't worry, Your Majesty! All problems will have a solution," the official assured to console the king.

Before the king could give him a reply, the commander rushed in. "I'm sorry to hear that Your Majesty had no sleep last night. Were you upset because our neighbour has decided to attack us? Please don't worry about it. Our army is definitely superior to that of the kingdom next door. We'll be able to scare them!"

Next came the minister. "Maybe your worry is caused by a fear that there's mounting crime and corruption in the kingdom, Your Majesty? That should not upset you. I shall send officials to detect all instances of corruption and punish all those who are involved in such acts."

King Salwa listened to all of them and simply nodded at the assurances



given by each one of them. He sent them away. The stomach-ache persisted. So, he decided to visit his mother and ask her whether she could think of some medicine. "What's this I hear?" the ageing lady asked her son. "Why should you spend sleepless nights? I'm sure you must be worrying about your son, the treasury, the security of the kingdom, and the corrupt officials. Who ever rules a country will necessarily have to face such or similar problems. That's why your father decided to entrust the kingdom in your hands. Look at the peace he enjoys now! Sleepless nights are concomitant





with ruling a kingdom.”

Salwa confessed to his mother. “Mother, all that has nothing to do with my problem. I’ve a stomach upset!”

“That’s only natural, my son!” continued the king’s mother. “When you’re beset with such problems, you won’t be able to enjoy your food. Besides, all that you eat will also not be easily digested. Sometimes there may be loss of appetite, too. There’s only one solution to all

this. Free yourself from all worries. Find a solution to every problem. If a king sleeps well, that indicates his subjects are happy and contented. He won’t have to worry about his people. A competent ruler will take interest in the administration.”

King Salwa wondered how a simple stomach-ache had opened his eyes to the problems facing the kingdom. He called the royal cook and gave him several gifts, much to his surprise.

Pradip: Dad, you're a lucky man.

Father: How's that, my son?

Pradip: You won't have to buy me any new books this year. I've been detained in my class.

R. R. R. R. R.



Chandamama Supplement-66

THE TREES OF INDIA

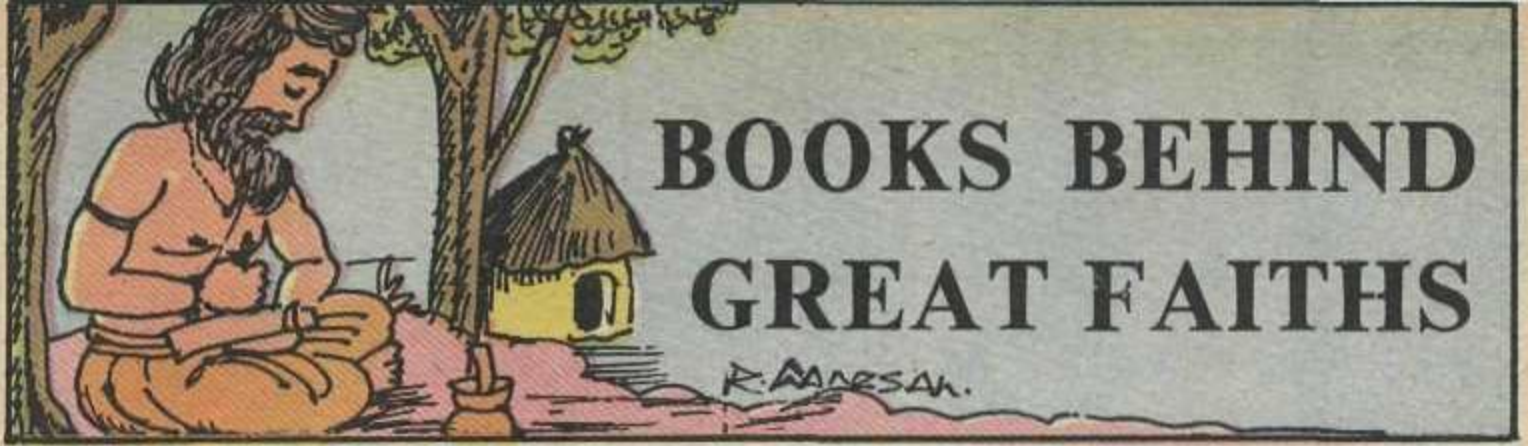
King of Fruits

Come April and we say, the mango season has started. It is only between April and August that we get to see the mango in plenty on the tree and in the market. Not for nothing has an annual Mango Fair been thought of and organised in Delhi, Bombay, and a few other places. Some five hundred varieties of mango have been identified as common and given exotic names—like **Suvarna-rekha** and **Mulgoa** in Andhra Pradesh, **Neelam** and **Banganapalle** in other parts of South India, **Langra**, **Chausa**, and **Dusheri** in U.P. and Bihar, **Gulab Khas** and **Bombai** in Bengal, and of course the most famous and costliest of all—**Aphonso** of Maharashtra. The **Tenneru** of Andhra normally weighs 1.6 kg and is nearly 23 cm long. Though called 'King of Kings', it is not as sweet as the others.

Botanist Linne (18th century) called the tree *mangifera indica*—the Indian mango-bearing tree. In size it is generally large, with spreading branches, growing to a height of 15m. The leaves, alternately inserted along the branches, are on an average 15cm long and 6cm broad, and shaped like a lance-head, tapering at both ends. The flowers, a yellowish green and hairy outside, are small and not very conspicuous unless they appear in a bunch.

The fruit is fleshy, with a large 'stone' in the centre. It can be called heart-shaped. The description of the mango as the 'King of Fruits' is attributed to poet Amir Khusro (14th century), but there are references to the mango in the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.





*(Every religious faith has at least one great book of authority; some faiths have many. In this series, **Chandamama** will introduce one great book of each faith, very briefly.)*

THE VEDAS

“Indian thought is seen at its highest in the Rig Veda ... It is the first book of India and also of mankind. At the same time it showed the highest point of human wisdom,” says Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji, a distinguished scholar.

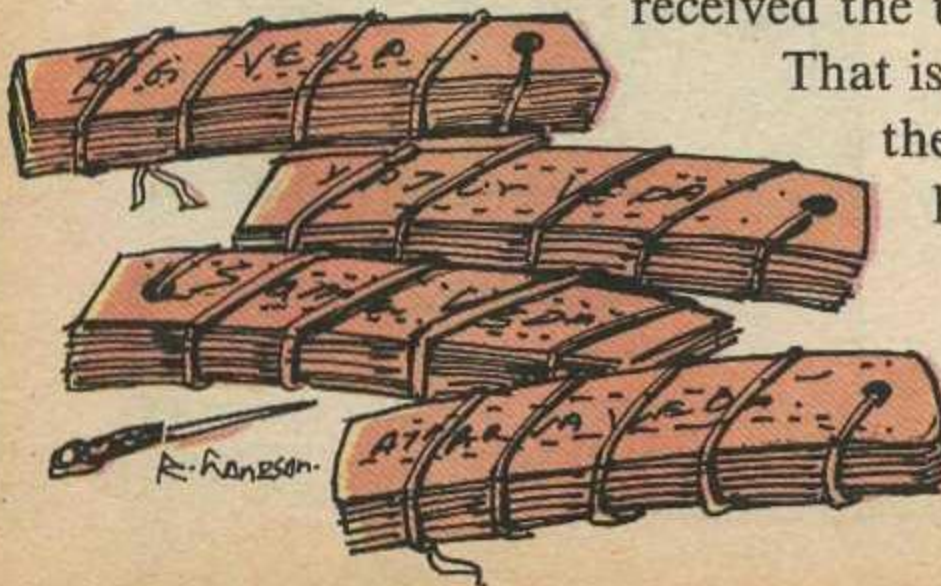
The world has witnessed great civilisations in the past. But no other civilisation is known to have left such a lasting work known as the Vedas, going back to at least four thousand years, if not more.

There are four Vedas: The Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, and the Atharva Veda. The word Veda means knowledge.

The authors of these works, the Rishis or seers, received the text during their meditations.

That is why the Vedas are known as the Srutis, meaning the words heard. Their language is a form of old Sanskrit.

For centuries the Vedas were not written down.



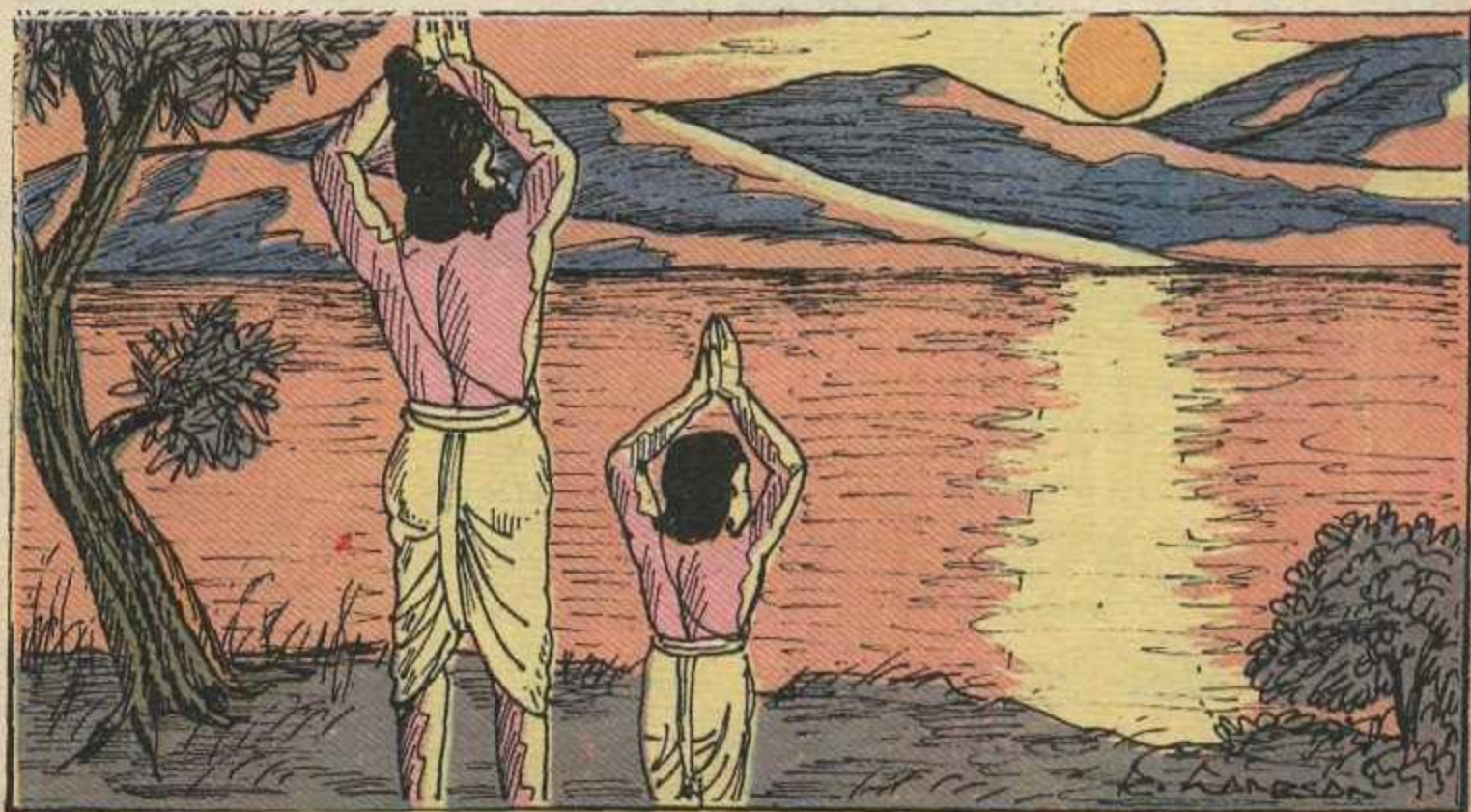
Recited by the Rishis, they were remembered by their disciples. A severe discipline must have been practised by generations of teachers and students to keep the Vedas alive through their memory.

The Vedas offer prayers and gratitude to the gods who are the presiding deities of light, air, rains, seasons, etc. They also sing the glory of life and of the possibility of the human life becoming a life divine. They gave the codes of conduct man should follow.

But beneath the hymns there are other secrets. They are meant for those seekers who look for answers to basic questions, such as: Why does one live? Why does one die? What happens to the soul after it leaves the body? Who are the gods? What is truth? So on and so forth.

Only a Rishi could explain the Vedas along these lines. He did so to such disciples who came to him with true quest.

The religious faith that later became known as Hinduism rests on the authority of the sacred Vedas.



DO YOU KNOW?

1. According to Hindu mythology, who was the first mortal to die?
2. A U.S. President was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for mediating between Russia and Japan to end the war between them. Who was he? In which year was the award given?
3. How many islands together go under the name Philippines?
4. One of the British rulers reigned longer than others. Who? For how long?
5. To honour which British king was the famous Gateway of India in Bombay built?
6. Which is the oldest university in the U.S.A.?
7. Who invented plastic?
8. The present capital of Turkey is Ankara. Which was its earlier capital?
9. One of the Asian countries was known as Aram 2,000 years ago. What is its present name?
10. Which is the largest lake in Africa?
11. Banks existed in ancient Babylonia and Egypt. Where did modern banking start?
12. A Roman emperor converted to Christianity. Who was he?
13. Who was the first person to come out of his spacecraft and walk in the outer space?
14. Who designed the city of Chandigarh?
15. How is river "Indus" referred to in Sanskrit?

Answers:

1. Yama.
2. Theodore Roosevelt, 1906.
3. Seven thousand islands.
4. Queen Victoria—63 years (1837-1901).
5. King George V.
6. Harvard University, which was founded in 1636.
7. Alexander Parks.
8. Istanbul.
9. Syria.
10. Lake Victoria.
11. Italy.
12. Constantine the Great.
13. Alexei Leonov, in 1965.
14. The French architect Le Corbusier.
15. Sindhu—meaning as vast as a sea. The early Aryan settlers were probably seeing such a vast expanse of water for the first time, during their trek from Central Asia to India.



THE MODIFIED HORSE

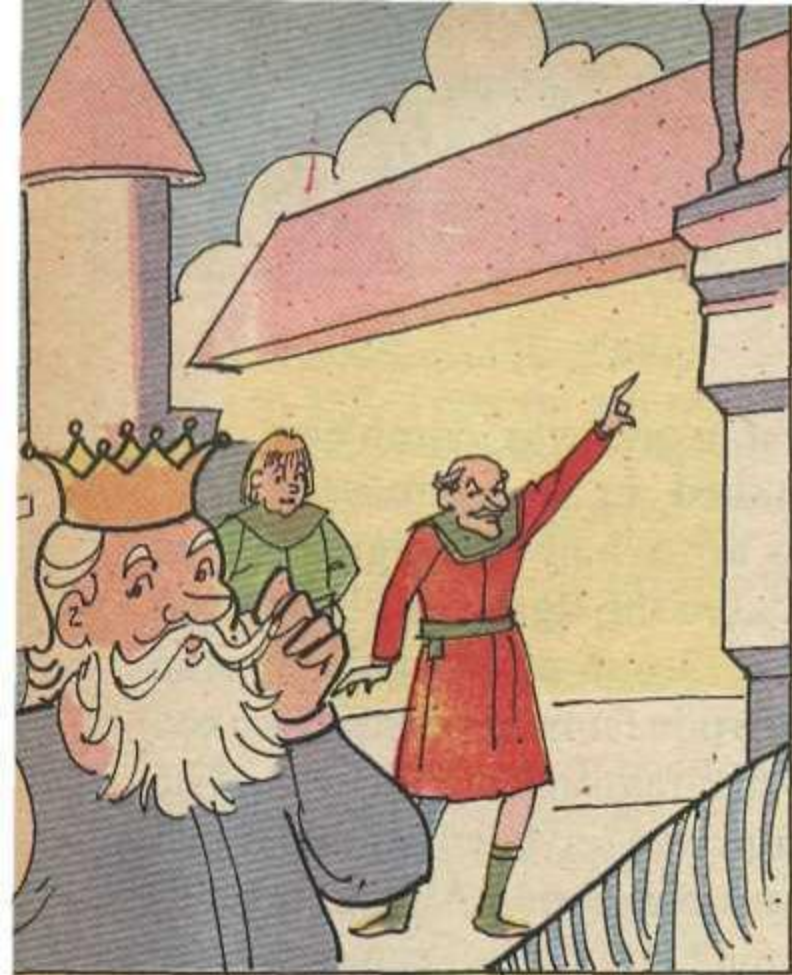
Once upon a time, in a small kingdom there lived a sculptor. His beautiful works on stone were appreciated by one and all. Soon his fame spread far and wide. A day came when the king of the land ordered a statue of himself to be done in marble. The humble artist was overjoyed at this royal assignment. He worked hard all day long and well into the midnight hours.

Days passed into weeks and weeks into months. At last, the

great work was completed and installed in the public square. The artist had taken great pains to carve the figure of his beloved ruler. On an appointed day, the king rode from his castle, flanked by his favourite courtiers. The statue was unveiled amidst much pomp and show. All stood spellbound! His statue seemed so real that the king was unable to believe that it was made of marble.

"Marvellous! Beautiful! Per-





fect!" he exclaimed and, turning to the sculptor, shook his hands warmly like a good old friend. "You're indeed a great artist! I feel honoured that you're one of my subjects. Here, take this sackful of gold as your reward."

But some of the courtiers seethed with jealousy and anger. "We're the king's favourites and his constant companions. But never have we met with such warm affection from him!" they thought to themselves. But they dared not pick any flaws in the statue of their lord, for the king himself had already declared it

perfect! What should they do to humiliate their rival?

"Indeed, Your Majesty," began the first one, taking courage, "your marble figure is perfect and we hail the great artist for his skill! But the steed you're mounted upon is not as handsome."

"Yes," joined another, "the figure of the horse is surely out of proportion. Its tail is too long and its head too large."

"The statue of the horse is absolutely a failure. The fall of its manes and the turn of its neck are rather awkward," added the third.

"If only the fold of the horse's left hind leg could be changed, it will stand much smarter," said the fourth.

Thus, one after another all the jealous courtiers found some fault in the animal's figure. The king nodded to their comments, for they were his counsellors. So many of them could not go wrong!

The humble sculptor listened quietly. He then said with a faint smile, "Your Majesty, these honourable men are not very happy with my sculpture of the



horse. Allow me seven more days. I shall try to change it to their taste."

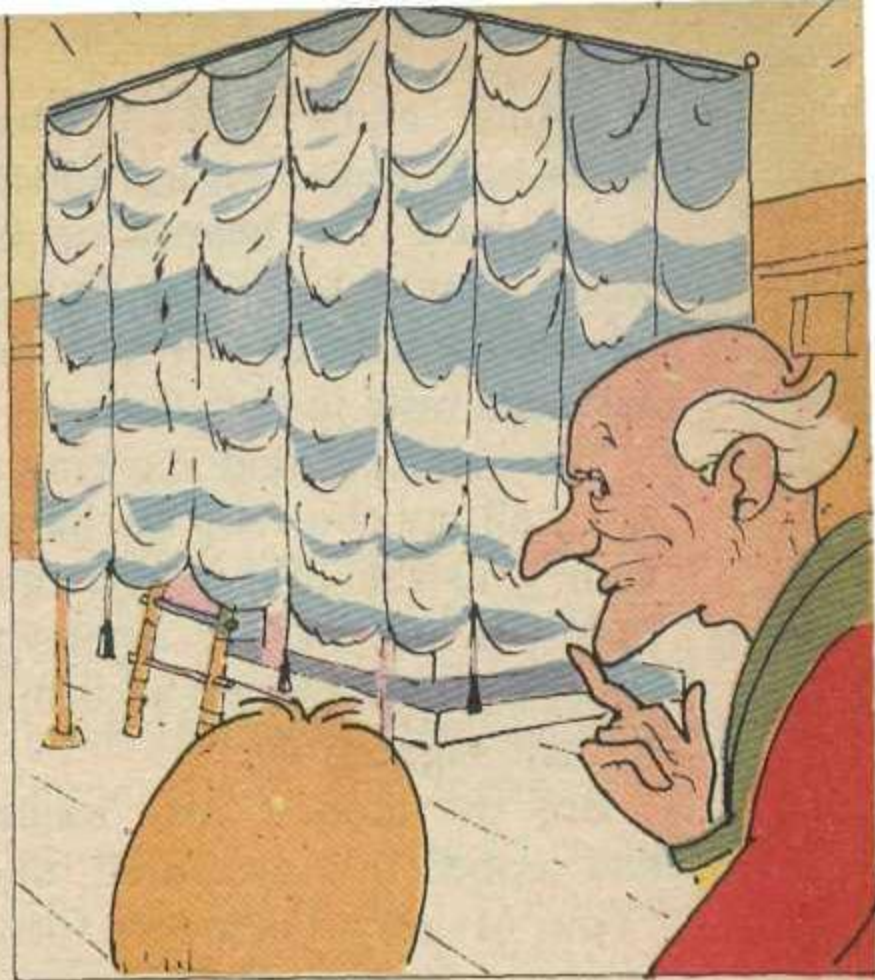
The king agreed to his request. The artist ordered temporary curtains to be put over the statue to enable him to work undisturbed. Day in and day out was heard the clang of hammer and chisel. The honourable courtiers did often pass by the enclosure. They were delighted by the sound and chuckled, looking at one another meaningfully.

Soon the seven long days passed, and the people who lived nearby gave a sigh of relief. For the loud noise of hammer and chisel had at last stopped now. All gathered in the central square. The king arrived, flanked by his favourite courtiers. The screens were drawn and the statue was unveiled once again.

The ruler exclaimed at its beauty and beamed a smile at its creator.

The sculptor looked at his first critic and said, "Revered sir, your comment was so much to the point that I devoted two full days to modify the figure accordingly. How do you find it now?"

The artist then turned to one



after another all his critics and praised them for their high aesthetic sense and asked them if they were satisfied with the modified horse. Indeed, they were thoroughly satisfied!

"Perfect!" said the eldest of the courtiers. "The steed is the most handsome that I have ever set my eyes upon."

"Yes, the work is now finely proportioned, with the animal's elegant head, and its tail not too long," said the second earnestly.

"How graceful are the fall of its manes and the turn of its neck!" exclaimed the other.



"Much smarter is the position of the horse's rear left leg. Indeed it enhances the beauty of the work now!" said the fourth, pretending to be one with the fine aesthetic taste in the court.

"O sculptor," said the king at last, "all my courtiers are happy with your creation. They think that it is now perfect, after you have improved upon it according to their suggestions."

But the modest man smiled and replied in a measured tone, "Your Majesty, I'm indeed fortunate to have such great and educated critics of art. But alas, the fact is, I have changed nothing. The work is as it was when you first saw it.

All stood amazed, once staring at the great statue and then at its

creator.

"What do you mean? Didn't we hear the sound of your tools?" asked the king rather surprised.

"O Lord, indeed you heard the sound of chisel and the hammer. I was only hammering at the virtuous quality of your loyal courtiers, who found faults in my work, simply because they were jealous," explained the sculptor with a low bow.

The king turned towards his men. They stood, heads hung.

"Bravo my dear good man! Bravo!" exclaimed the king, affectionately patting the sculptor on the back. "You've not only created a marvellous piece of art but also hammered my courtiers' pride and reputation to pieces!"

—Retold by Anup Kishore Das





New Tales of King Vikram and
the Vampire

A Mahout As Monarch

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the Vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King! You seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. Maybe you won't give up as long as some physical strength is left in you. After that,



what will you do? Go to a corner and ruminate? What'll happen to your determination then? How long do you think you will go on like this? I'm afraid you'll become old before that and face a lot of problems—like what had happened to King Rajendra of Rangapur. Won't you like to hear his story?" The vampire then began his narration.

Rangapur was a prosperous kingdom. King Rajendra ruled justly and he was fair in his decisions. He ensured that his subjects led a happy and peaceful life, though he himself was

unhappy and sad all the while as he had no son or daughter to inherit the kingdom. It looked as though he would carry his misfortune till the end of his life. He pined for a child and he neglected his health and soon he was bedridden. Years passed and he was growing older and older.

As he was unable to carry on his reign, he handed over the responsibilities to his ministers. Some of them were just waiting for an opportunity. They took advantage of the situation and demanded bribes whenever a chance came their way and resorted to all sorts of cruel acts which people suffered without any protest. The kingdom witnessed murders, thefts, and robberies. There was lawlessness everywhere, and a stage came when the people could not bear their misrule any longer.

Kesav was of the same age as the king's. He was in charge of the royal stable and looked after the elephants. He, too, was growing old and decided to leave the king's service after serving Rajendra for long years. He sought an audience with the king. "Your Majesty, I don't think I



can any longer look after the elephants. I have a son and I sent him to an *ashram* to have his education under a *guru*. He is not able to get any work where he can put to use whatever he has learnt. So, I would request Your Majesty to be kind enough to take him in my place and allow me to retire from service."

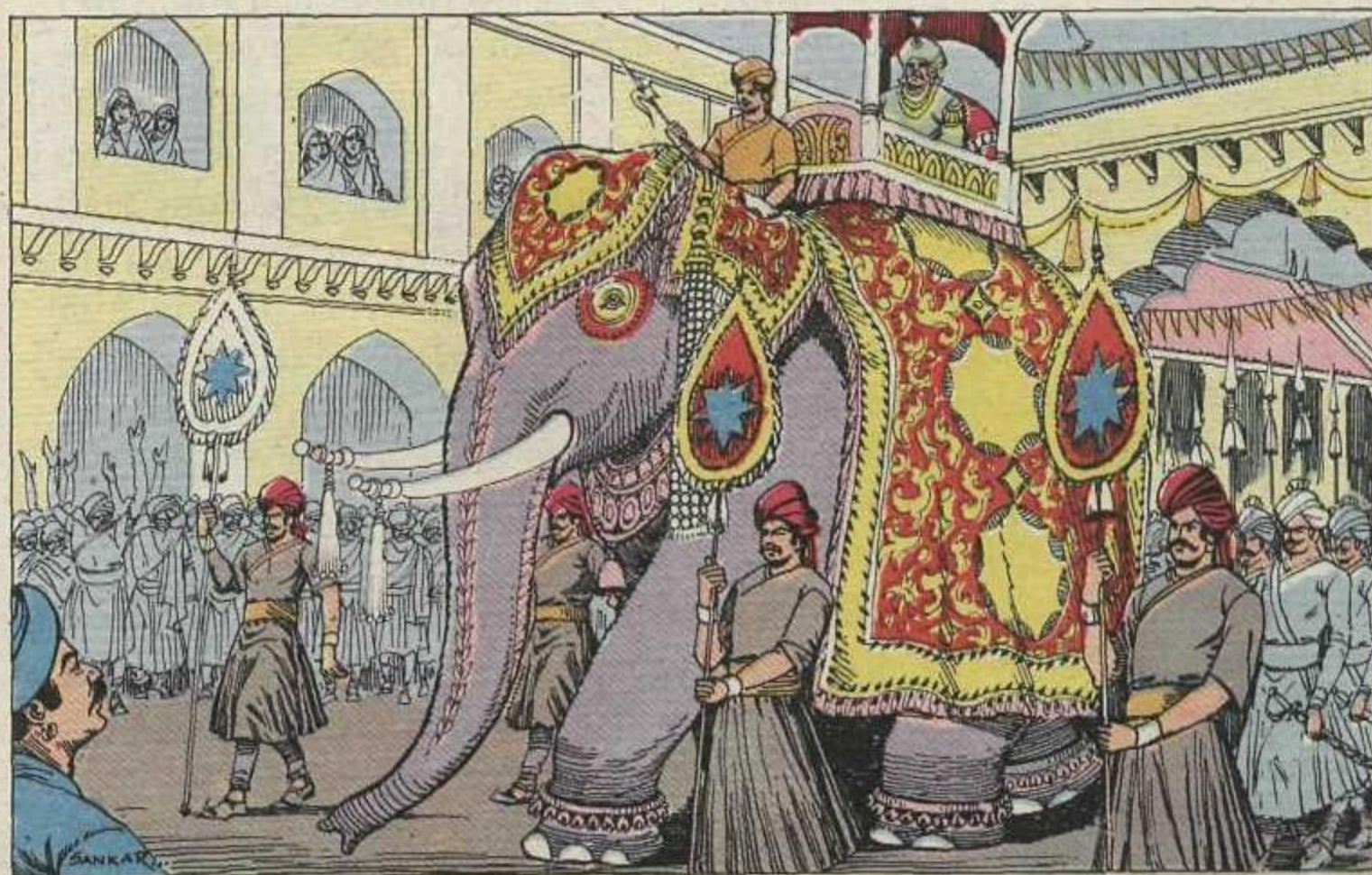
The king was sorry to lose the services of Kesav, but decided to accede to his request. "All right, you bring your son to me," said the king, full of sympathy. "Let me test him before I take him."

The next morning Kesav and Madhav reached the palace. The

king left his bed to go with them to the stable. He pointed to an elephant. "Karmugha is in *masth*. Madhav, I want you to bring him under control and ride on it around the palace once."

Madhav went straight to the elephant undaunted, tapped him on his forelegs, and made him kneel so that he could easily get on to his back. Madhav went round the palace once and returned triumphantly. The king was very pleased. He immediately made Madhav the royal mahout.

A few days later, it was the king's birthday. The streets were



decorated and there was a festive look everywhere. As usual, King Rajendra rode an elephant in procession. Mahout Madhav walked by the side of the caparisoned elephant carrying the king in the *howdah*. People lined up on both sides of the streets to greet their king. The sound of music rose in the air, while the fireworks turned the skies into a glorious spectacle.

Suddenly there was a heavy downpour as if the sky was jealous of the celebrations down below on the ground. People ran helter-skelter. The elephant on which the king rode was approaching a decorated arch which was now swaying in the strong breeze, and looked as though it would crash to the ground any moment. Madhav cleverly manouevred the elephant through the arch and the next moment it crumbled down. King Rajendra was thus saved.

On reaching the palace, the king praised Madhav. "If it had not been for you, I would have lost my life, Madhav," said the king said gratefully. "I must do something for you in return. Whatever you wish for, you may ask me. I shall see that you get it."

"I've not one, but three wishes, Your Majesty," replied Madhav. "My friend, Jagan, was with me in the *ashram*. We studied together. He tried for a job in the palace, but did not succeed. May I request you to give him a job?"

King Rajendra did not respond immediately. Madhav thought he must be waiting to hear his second wish. "Someone came and stole a lot of things from my neighbour's house. We met the *Kothwal* and made a complaint, but the thief has not been apprehended till now. My neighbour must be paid adequate compensation."

The king was silent still. "My third wish is," continued Madhav, "one of my teachers in the *gurukul* is suffering from an incurable disease. He consulted several *vaid*s, all of whom excused themselves, telling him that the royal physician alone can cure him. Would Your Majesty be good enough to direct the royal *Vaid* to examine him and treat him?"

"I agree that all your three wishes are equally important and urgent," remarked King Rajendra. "However, as I told you earlier, only one wish can be



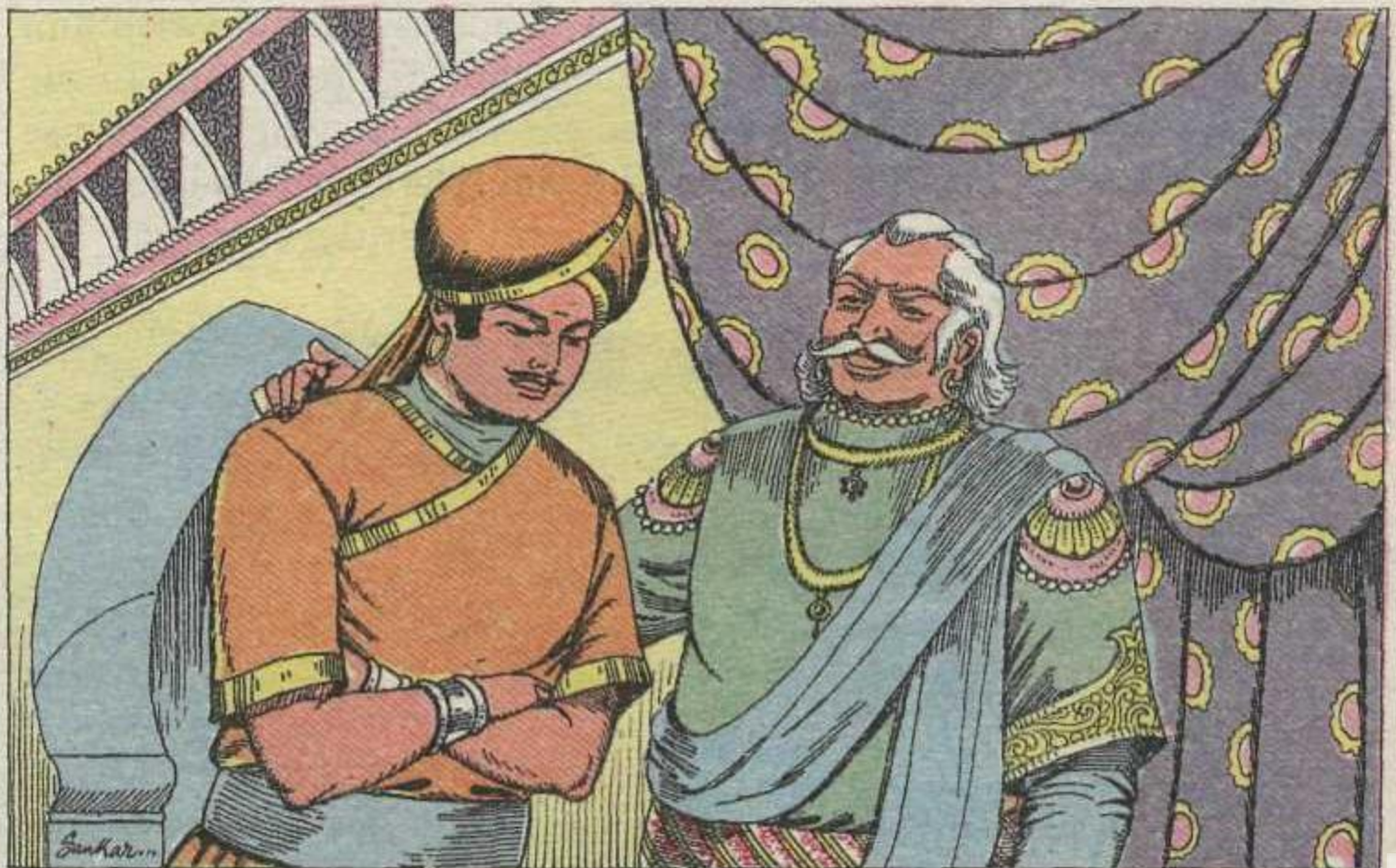
carried out now. You may choose one and tell me."

Madhav thought for a while and said, "Your Majesty! Many of your officers are taking bribes and not doing their duties properly. So, my lone wish is that you should punish them and root out corruption and injustice in the kingdom."

King Rajendra smiled, got up from his seat and embraced Madhav. "I was all the while worrying who'll be there to look after the kingdom when I depart from this world," said the king with great relief. "Now I'm no longer worried on that count.

You began asking for favours on behalf of different persons, but never wanted anything for yourself. I'm going to declare you as crown prince and after my death, you must rule this kingdom."

The vampire concluded the story there and turned to King Vikramaditya. "O King! Was King Rajendra right in handing over the kingdom to a mere mahout? Wasn't it a foolish act on his part? There was no connection between Madhav's first three wishes and the last one. Why was it so? The king had grown old and become senile. That's why he chose a mahout to



succeed him, wasn't it? Does a mahout have any qualification to become king? If you know the answers and still prefer to keep silent, beware, your head will be blown to pieces!"

The king replied calmly: "One need not lose intelligence and strength when one becomes old. Some people may be affected by old age, not all. They may become weak, but they need not lose intelligence or wisdom. Their mind may remain alert though they may be physically weak. This is just normal. The king's assumption that Madhav was competent to sit on the throne after his death and his decision to make him his successor was perfectly all right. Because his fourth wish indirectly took care of his three earlier wishes. Madhav's friend

in the *gurukul* could not get a job in the palace because he was unable to pay any bribe. Madhav was confident that the king would grant his third wish—to send the royal physician to treat his teacher. Madhav did not ask for anything for himself. He was more anxious and sympathetic towards others. This quality reassured the king that Madhav would not be selfish but would protect his subjects and safeguard their interests and welfare. So, he deserved to be a king rather than remain a mahout. It was after deep thought that the king took his decision.

The vampire realised that King Vikramaditya had outwitted him once again. He flew back to the ancient tree carrying the corpse with him. The king drew his sword and went after the vampire.





VEER HANUMAN

(43)

(Hanuman overcomes Rama with his devotion and is rewarded by Sita. After they all leave his mother's ashram, Hanuman goes to Gandhamadana for meditation. Days pass. Rama's messenger, Bhadra, meets Hanuman and tells him of all the sad happenings in Ayodhya—how Sita was taken to the forest and abandoned there, how her twins, Lava and Kusa, were trained by sage Viswamitra, how Rama happened to meet Sita and his sons, and how Sita was taken away by her mother Bhoomi Devi. Rama now needs Hanuman's help and Bhadra has been sent to take him to Ayodhya.)

On his way to Ayodhya, after listening to the sad narration by Bhadra of the happenings in Ayodhya, Hanuman stopped by the ashram of Valmiki. "O sage! How could all this happen to my lord, Rama?" he asked with a heavy heart. Wasn't the predicament Rama faced a dilemma for him as well? thought Hanuman.

"Ruling a kingdom is not anything easy, O wise one!" said Valmiki. "One must be ready to face accusations and opposition. Innocent people will have allegations levelled against them. Sometimes they would even be proved against them. People will indulge in wild rumours without realising what harm they may cause. For some it will be

TWO RAKSHASA SURVIVORS





just habitual to point an accusing finger at others. Kings and rulers will necessarily have to face these things and tolerate them. They must have the patience to bear with them. You know very well what a king's duties and responsibilities are. Just take it as though Rama has come to a similar pass."

Hanuman realised that it was a crown of thorns that Rama was wearing. Valmiki showed him the hut where Sita lived and gave birth to Lava and Kusa; the place where the boys tied the Aswamedha yaga horse from Ayodhya and fought Bharata, Lakshmana and

Shatrughna. He reverentially touched the ground where the earth had split before Mother Earth took away Sita in answer to her prayers. He then bade farewell to the sage and rose to the skies again.

Soon after he arrived in Ayodhya, the sight that greeted him first was the pillar of arrows that Lava and Kusa were busy making in the garden. The moment they saw Hanuman, they covered him with arrows and he was unable to move this way or that. "Who are you?" Lava asked of Hanuman. "You look like a sorcerer!"

Hanuman thought that Lava resembled his mother and Kusa looked like Rama. "I'm Hanuman. I wish to meet my lord, Rama," he replied.

"We can't believe that!" remarked Lava. There was a shadow of doubt on his face. "You must be a sorcerer who has assumed the form of a monkey, and is posing as the great Hanuman to hoodwink us."

Kusa did not allow his brother to say anything more. "We'll free you only if you prove you are really Hanuman!"

Hanuman then enlarged his body and, placing the boys on his shoulders, he rose to the skies and flew criss-cross over Ayodhya. He also

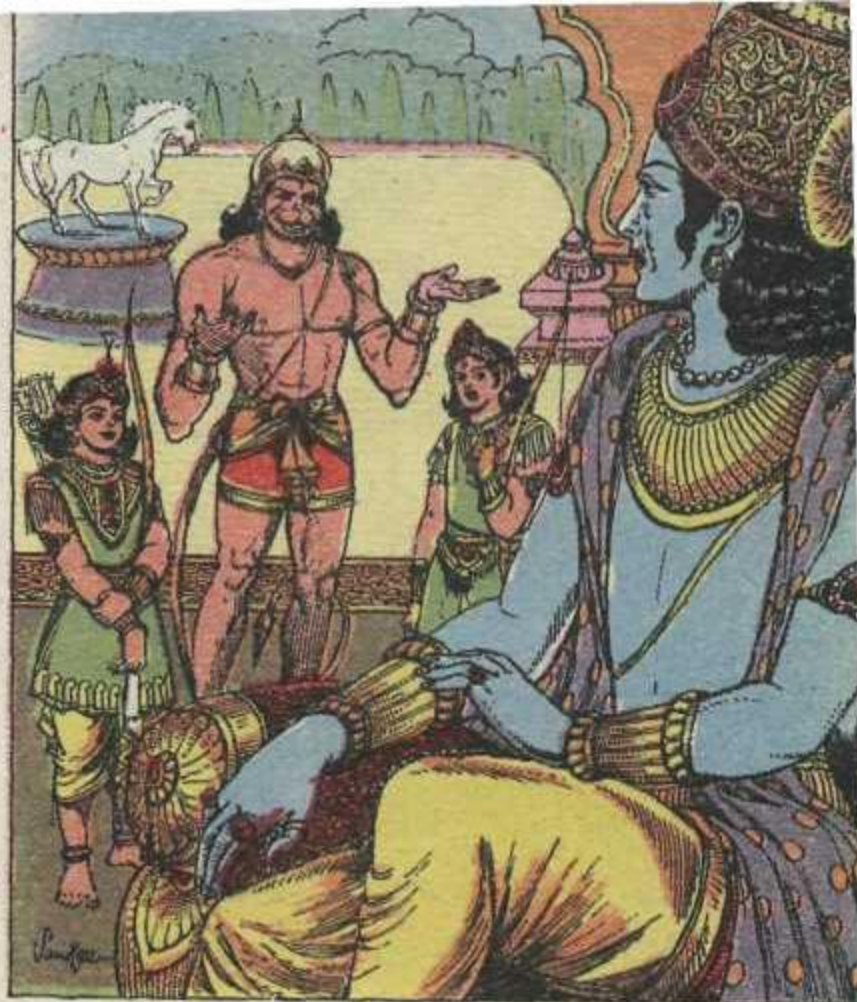


elongated his tail and made it in to a huge basket.

Both Lava and Kusa were now convinced that it was the real Hanuman who was standing before them. "Hanuman! We now believe you!" said the brothers together. "We're fortunate that we could witness your prowess. Come, let's go to the palace."

The three went straight to Rama. The moment he saw Hanuman, he could not control his tears. Hanuman prostrated before Rama and exclaimed, "What's this, my lord? How can you be carried away by grief, like ordinary men? Have you ever thought why all this should have happened this way? It's a warning to the generations to come that ruling a kingdom is not a bed of roses, that a king must be ready to sacrifice anything any time. Ram Rajya has to be an epitome of this attitude. Anybody understanding all this will not blame your rule."

"Hanuman! I've acquired some peace of mind after seeing you and hearing your words of comfort," said Rama, heaving a sigh of relief. "I can't bear the loss of Sita; on the other hand, I'm worried whether the Aswamedha *yaga* will be completed at all. If I'm not able to con-



clude the *yaga*, why should I remain a king? Why should I remain alive? The *yaga* horse is heading towards Manipuri. I need your help to protect it. That's why I sent for you. My three brothers have followed the horse, but they may need your help."

Hanuman, who had taken it as his duty to carry out any command from Rama, caught hold of his mace and immediately rose to the skies. On his way to Manipuri, he saw a demon and a demoness making merry. Some doubts arose in him. He approached them after reducing himself to a small size. From the low branch of a tree, he listened to their





conversation.

"Whenever you fight with your enemies," the demoness was saying, "you should see that all of them are done away with. If even one of the enemies were to escape, he'll be able to create havoc. We're two who have escaped like that, Karala Kanta! Remember how that night we posed as a washerman and his wife and quarrelled about my coming late from another house! See what repercussions it had on the life of Rama!"

"You acted wonderfully well, Soorpanakha!" remarked Karala Kanta, thumping on his muscles. He

was the younger brother of Ravana. When the demon king was fighting with Rama, he managed to escape on seeing his brother being defeated by Rama. He wanted to take revenge on Rama and Sita who were responsible for this brother's death. That was how he posed as a washerman in Ayodhya and caused misunderstanding in Rama about Sita.

Similarly, Ravana's sister, Soorpanakha, had escaped death during the Rama-Ravana war. She was also eager to wreak vengeance on Rama. So, she too had reached Ayodhya hoping she would find a way to insult Rama and Sita. She posed as a washerwoman and began searching for her brother Karala Kanta. Both of them were now dying of hunger and very much wished they would get some human being as their prey. As both of them had taken the form of humans, they could not at first recognise each other. So, Soorpanakha thought she would grab Karala Kanta, who himself was planning to pounce on her.

Suddenly she assumed her original form of a demoness and with a blood-curdling shriek approached Karala Kanta in front of her. Karala Kanta was surprised. "So, you're a demoness?" It was then that they



recognised each other. They began planning their strategy. They slowly reached Ayodhya, and to whoever they met, they spoke ill of Rama and Sita. They watched the people's reaction and were overjoyed that they, too, had begun doubting the chastity of Sita. Now, after having achieved their purpose, they were about to leave Ayodhya, gloating over the success of their mission.

"It's good that Hanuman was not in Ayodhya," said Karala Kanta. "If he had been in Ayodhya, he would have strangled us to death with his tail. We are fortunate, we could come away from Ayodhya before he arrived. In this forest, we are safe; no one would be able to find us out."

"Oh, don't mention the name of Hanuman!" said Soorpanakha, looking here and there. "The very mention of his name gives me the scare."

"Hanuman is a terrible fellow," agreed Karala Kanta. "Didn't he burn down the palace our brother built for you? He set fire to his own tail and then went about destroying the entire Lanka city. Yes, anybody would be scared of him!"

Soorpanakha then showed him the marks of burn on her body she had sustained. "Oh! You're still car-



rying them as a memento!" said Karala Kanta.

Soorpanakha was angry. "Stop it!" she shouted at him. "Don't jibe at me!"

"I didn't mean to hurt you, Soorpanakha!" said Karala Kanta apologetically. "I'm equally afraid of that Hanuman! He can kill us with his tail. It's his tail that we must beat to a pulp!"

"That's it!" remarked Soorpanakha. "But do you think *you* can do it? You, who ran away from the battlefield?" She thought she had paid him back in his own coin!

"It was not out of fear that I es-





caped from the battlefield!" protested Karala Kanta. "I wanted to wreak vengeance on Rama and all others. It's my good luck that I met you in Ayodhya. Our aims are the same. We must annihilate our enemy together."

Soorpanakha and Karala Kanta then began to plot their strategy. "We must now kill Rama's Aswamedha *yaga* horse," said Karala Kanta. "Only then can we disturb the *yaga* he's performing. He's now bemoaning the loss of his wife. If he can't complete the *yaga*, that would soon bring about his end."

"Come on, let's start," said

Soorpanakha. "We shall kill that *yaga* horse and eat it."

Karala Kanta got up from the stone on which he was sitting. Just then Hanuman shook a branch of the tree he was hiding on. The leaves fell on Soorpanakha.

"Ah! that's a good sign!" said Soorpanakha. "Someone is blessing us with a shower of flowers."

"You're a fool, Soorpanakha!" chided Karala Kanta. "You don't know the difference between flowers and leaves!"

"Oh! I don't care, if they're only leaves!" said Soorpanakha. "Let's not waste our time by entering into a controversy. Come on! Let's go on our mission."

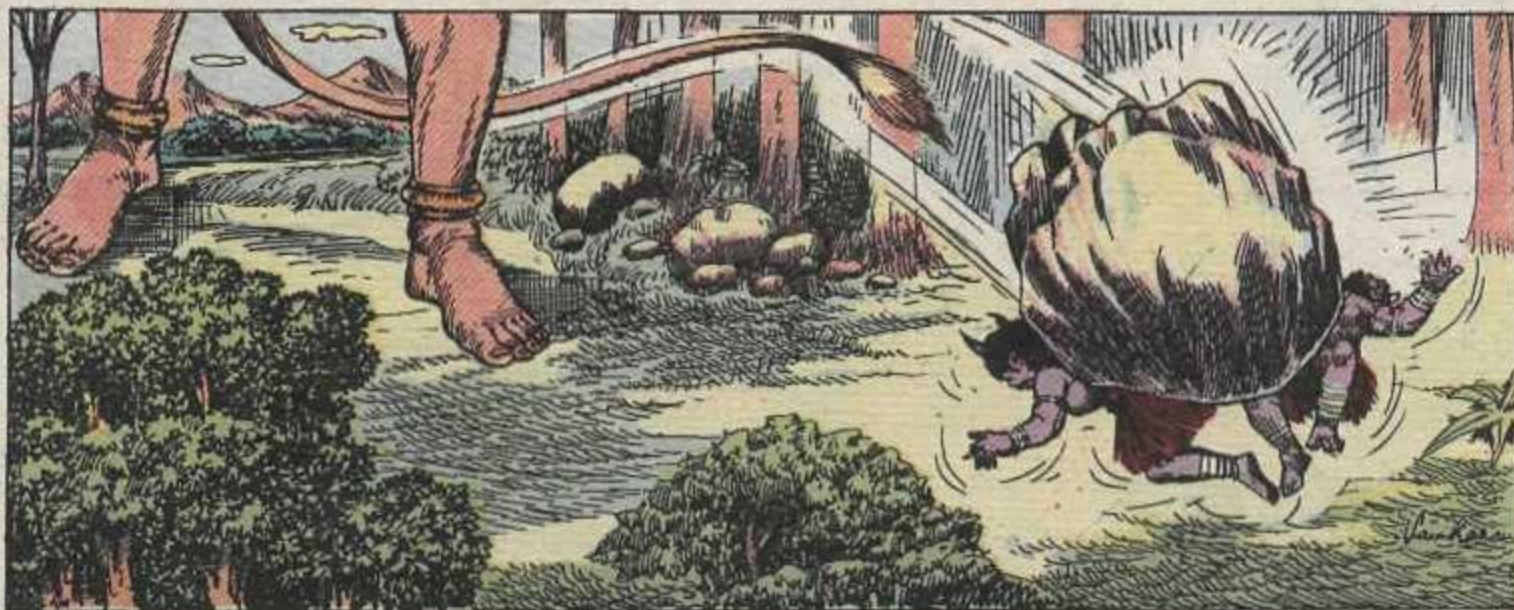
They had hardly taken two or three steps when they saw something dangling from a tree. A rope? And it was moving towards them. That was actually Hanuman's tail!

Karala Kanta examined it carefully. Wasn't it the tail of a huge snake? he expressed his doubt. "It's not a snake," said Soorpanakha. "It's the tail of a monkey. Who knows, it could be Hanuman's tail!"

"Hanuman's tail?" said Karala Kanta unbelievably. "No, I don't think so. How can Hanuman be here? It must be some other monkey."







"No, I know for certain that it's Hanuman's tail!" asserted Soorpanakha.

"Ha! Do you say Hanuman is already here?" exclaimed Karala Kanta. "If so, I'm leaving!" He then started running.

Soorpanakha was bewildered. Was Karala Kanta leaving her alone? She caught hold of him. "Are you trying to escape, after leaving me alone?" she asked him angrily.

Hanuman had a good laugh. Look at that! They wanted to stand together and crush their enemy. But now they were quarrelling! He realised that the time had come to do

away with them, and he should not wait for a better opportunity.

With a shriek he jumped down from the tree. The two took to their heels. Hanuman caught hold of a huge boulder and dropped it on them. That was enough to crush both Soorpanakha and Karala Kanta. Thus the two Rakshasa survivors of Ravana's family were killed by Hanuman. He then rose to the skies on his way to Manipuri. When he was approaching that place, there was a sudden flash of lightning. He hastened there before another lightning struck that kingdom.

-To continue

**Good to begin well, but better to end well
Measure twice but cut once
You can't get blood out of stone**

THE WORLD OF NATURE

Salty fact

"Why the sea is salty" is a popular theme of folk tales of various countries. Between the wreck of a huge ship carrying loads and loads of salt, and the fight between the sea, wind, and clouds which churned the sea thus producing salt, these stories give out varying explanations how the seawater became salty. But the fact is, rivers invariably flow towards the sea, and they carry with them salts and other material from the surface of rocks over which they flow. All these material dissolve and get deposited in the sea. Though some part of the water gets evaporated, the salt from that part of the water accumulates and there is thus some concentration of salt, or salinity. The saline water of the sea is led into specially prepared shallow troughs on land. When the water evaporates, it leaves crystallised salt in the troughs. This is collected and cleaned for our use.



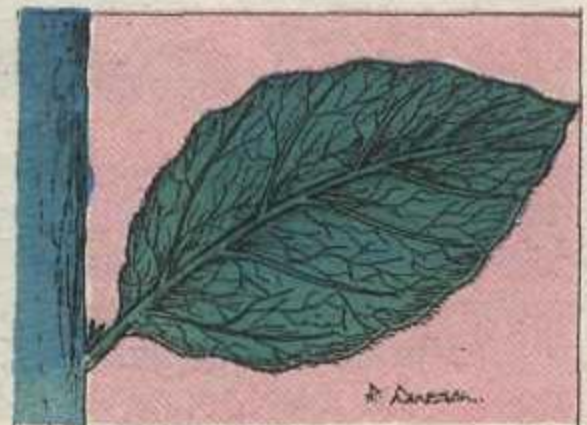
Living without water

We all know that plants need water for sustenance and growth. We cannot get water in deserts—except where there are oases. But plants do grow in deserts. They are called cacti (*singular cactus*). Cacti also require water, like any other plant. But, then, how do they survive when deserts normally do not receive any rain? Cacti, as you know, are devoid of leaves. However, their thick stems are like containers which store water that sustains the plant through long periods of drought. Cacti also have rather wide roots that extend for long distances around them. These roots try to trap as much water as possible whenever there are rains. You can grow cacti in pots. Even if you forget to water them, they will not die. But if you water them at regular intervals, they will grow rapidly and may even surprise you with flowers!



Leaves and veins

The veins on leaves make attractive patterns. But they have more worthy functions. Such as, they carry, like the veins and arteries in the human body, water, minerals, and nutrients that a plant needs for its survival and growth. All these are absorbed mainly from the soil, and also from the atmosphere, and have to be taken to all parts of the plant. Sap or the liquid which takes the nutrients through a plant gets circulated through these veins that we see on the leaves. They branch out as they reach the edges of leaves. Thus every part of a leaf gets nourished. Shall we say the veins on leaves are *not* vainglorious!



SPORTS SNIPPETS

Behind the microphone

Imagine yourself to be a commentator. A young batsman, donning his first Test cap, has just scored his first ever run. How will you describe it to your listeners? Brian Johnston will tell you how. In his case, it was India's Maninder Singh of Delhi, playing his first Test against England. Brian was heard to say that Maninder had just scored his first run and "he is 999 runs short of his 1,000 Test runs!" Well, nobody except Brian Johnston would have thought up such a



remark. In a way it was prophetic, too. Brian was a great lover of cricket and cricketers and was considered unique for the anecdotes with which he used to punctuate his commentaries. His career "behind the microphone" lasted nearly

fifty years. He joined BBC in 1946. For some years, he switched over to TV, but in 1970 he went back to radio. Once he was stumped by India's captain Ajit Wadekar. As he was returning to the pavilion at the end of his innings, Brian asked him how he got out and extended the microphone to catch his answer. "Me speak no English!" was Ajit's answer. Though Brian felt fooled, he would often recall the incident on and off the field. This veteran commentator passed away early in January.

A new milestone

Till last year, Sunil Gavaskar's 10,122 runs in 125 matches was the world record for the maximum runs in Tests. Last season, Australian captain Allan Border overtook that figure. But on January 28,



Border became the first batsman in cricket history to complete 11,000 Test runs. He made this new world record when he scored 84 runs in Australia's first innings in the third Test against South Africa at Adelaide. They were playing for the World Series Cup. Border (38 years) is expected to announce his retirement after Australia plays three Tests in South Africa in February-March.

Three wickets for 3 runs

Pacebowler Fanie de Villiers, of South Africa, was playing his second Test—against Australia, in Sydney. He took 6 Australian wickets for 43 runs in Australia's second innings. At the end of the match, his tally was 10 wickets for



123. South Africa was re-admitted to International Cricket only after the release of the African National Congress leader, Mr. Nelson Mandela, and lifting of the ban on South Africa imposed by the nations of the world in protest against its policy of apartheid. So, for several years, no international team visited South Af-

rica nor were the South Africans welcome in cricketing countries. However, in 1980, some "rebel" teams from England and Australia played in South Africa, when De Villiers joined his country's team. He was also not quite satisfied with the first-class league matches to which the South African players were confined for long. But he made it up by going to England at his own expense "to work out and build yourself up". That brought dividends. In the Sydney Test, he got the wicket of opener Michael Slate. When Australia were 51 for one, he got three more wickets in five balls. The batsmen could score not more than 3 runs! The next day, De Villiers got two more wickets, including that of the last man, Glenn McGrath.

To final within 8 hours

Mark Petchey of Britain won both the semi-final and final of the South Australian grass court tennis championship on the same day—Sunday, December 11, 1993! After winning the semi-final, he had hardly eight hours to get ready for the final. His semi-final with Kent Kinnear (U.S.A.) on Saturday was marred by rains and the play was held over for Sunday morning. Petchey won 6-3, 6-2. Later, he beat finalist Peter Tramacchi by the same score to win the prize money of 25,000 dollars.

World record

Merlene Ottey of the U.S.A. is the world outdoor champion for 50 metres. At the Russian Winter athletics meet in Moscow early in February, she created a new indoor record by clocking 6.00 seconds, clipping .03 seconds off the world record of her rival, Irina Privalova of Russia, made just three days earlier (February 1).



The Rare Veena

Thanjavur once did not have any musician of repute. But Sanjeevi continued to make *Veenas* and sell them – not to many from Thanjavur, but several people from other towns, where Sanjeevi and his *Veenas* were well known. The instruments he made were of high quality.

Sanjeevi was now getting old. He wished to teach his son, Ramayya, how to make good *Veenas* so that the family trade would flourish. Ramayya soon learnt the tricks of the trade and became an expert, like his father, in fabricating *Veenas*.

Nearby forests had a lot of trees; their wood was good for making *Veenas*. Ramayya would lead their workers to the forest, select the trees, and tell them to be cut into the required sizes and shapes.

The princess of the kingdom who was a lover of music, came to hear of Ramayya's *Veenas* and their quality

and wished to acquire one for herself. She sent a soldier to Thanjavur to buy a *Veena*. He went to Ramayya and conveyed to him the princess's desire.

Ramayya was very happy. So, the princess wished to have a *Veena* made by his own hands? "I am afraid I don't have a *Veena* ready with me. I shall make one within a week and shall myself come and deliver it to the princess," he told the soldier and sent him away.

The next day, Ramayya went to the forest. He went about examining the trees to decide which one he would cut and use for the *Veena* for the princess. He finally marked a tree and asked his worker to cut it down.

He had hardly raised his axe when a cry arose. "Stop it! This is where I live! Don't destroy it!" The voice was that of a woman. Ramayya

looked all around. Suddenly a woman's figure appeared before them. Ramayya and his worker were startled.

"Why do you want to cut this tree?" the figure asked. "You people have been felling trees indiscriminately and, as a result, we don't have any place to live! Don't these trees give you shelter? You shouldn't cut them down!"

"Please listen to me, O lady!" said Ramayya gathering his wits. "I make *Veenas* which require wood. I've agreed to make a *Veena* for the princess of the land. And that needs the best wood. That's why I was about to cut *this* tree."

"Oh! That's the reason for destroying my tree!" remarked the figure. "Then, I shall give you a *Veena* for the use of the princess." The next moment, a cute little *Veena* appeared in her hands. Ramayya stared at it in wonder.

"This is a unique *Veena*," said the woman. "It has some rare qualities. This can be played by even those who do not know how to play a *Veena*. The moment they strum the strings, music will emanate from the *Veena*. One has only to invoke the blessings of goddess Saraswathi."



"That's marvellous!" exclaimed Ramayya.

"This *Veena* has some more attributes as well," continued the figure. "One can play any *raga* on this *Veena*. However, one has to be careful while playing the *ragas* Mohanam and Amritavarshini. Whoever plays Mohanam will be able to marry the girl he loves; Amritavarshini, if played, will bring rains. But, remember, these attributes will remain with this *Veena* only as long as this tree lives, and I live on this tree." She then handed the *Veena* to Ramayya, who took it from her with great reverence. When he raised



his head, he found the figure had already disappeared.

Ramayya was in ecstasies. However, as he walked back home, the thought of a priceless gift with which he could even try to entice the princess slowly made him feel arrogant. He warned his worker to keep everything a secret and not to tell anyone of their experience in the forest. He agreed, but Ramayya kept on reminding him till they reached his house.

The man was intrigued. He was unable to retain the secret within himself. He very much wanted to share it with someone. He decided to confide in his wife and told her

everything after eliciting a promise from her that she would keep the secret. The moment her husband left for work, she ran to *her* neighbour and confided in her. The neighbour, in turn, confided in her neighbour. Well, the secret was no more a secret before long.

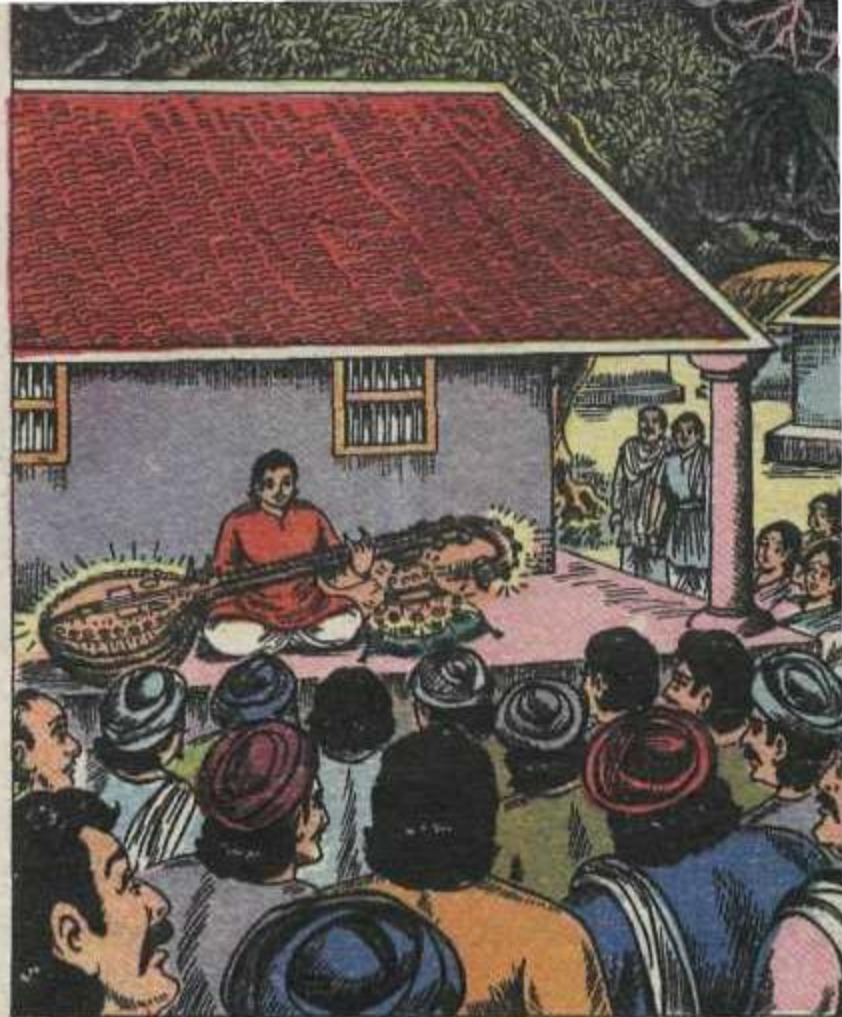
The next morning Ramayya was greeted with the sight of a crowd of people in front of his house. The moment he opened the door and saw the crowd, he knew that they must have heard of the divine *Veena* that he got as a gift the previous day. They requested him to play the instrument so that they could listen to its divine music.



Now, Ramayya really did not know how to play a *Veena*, though he was an expert in making the instrument. But he remembered the woman telling him that anyone could play on the unique *Veena*. Still he hesitated to play it in front of a huge crowd.

One young man among them shouted: "Oh! This man does not know any music. He has merely spread the rumour that he is in possession of a unique *Veena* and all that! What did I hear? That if the *raga* Mohanam were to be played, the player would wed his love? Hey, mister, why don't you play Mohanam and seek the princess's hand? Go on! Play Mohanam!" he prompted Ramayya.

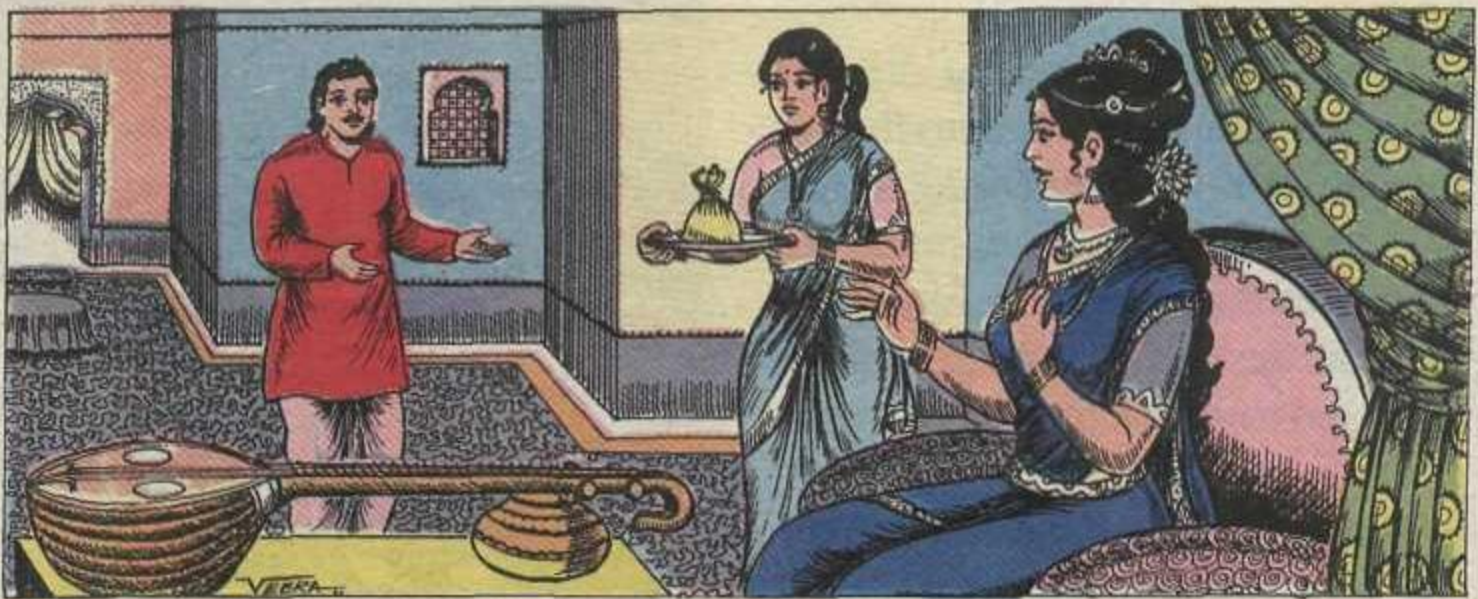
Ramayya thought, the man was not prompting him, and was really provoking him. He turned to him and said, "Don't belittle this divine *Veena*. I shall play it right now and here, and reveal its unique powers." He went inside and brought the *Veena*. He then sat on the verandah, held the *Veena* in hand, and invoked the blessings of goddess Saraswathi. His anger with the crowd had welled up so much that instead of Mohanam, what he played turned out to be Amritavarashini.



Not only did his calculation to get married to the princess go awry, but his music brought about nature's fury, resulting in heavy thunder-showers and floods. The crowd ran hither and thither, creating confusion all over the place. Ramayya did not know what to do. Suddenly, he found that it was not a *Veena* that he was holding but a huge snake. With a shriek, he threw the snake afar. It did not fall anywhere, but rose into the skies and disappeared.

Sanjeevi heard his son's shriek and ran to his help. "What happened, Ramayya?" he asked his son. Ramayya then narrated all that had





happened in the forest. "My son! You've brought disrepute to our profession," said Sanjeevi, face crestfallen. "You should never be greedy. Greed will take man to shameful heights. When you got that unique *Veena*, you forgot your profession, your career, and nourished desires that cannot be reached. You've learnt a lesson. Now go back to the forest, cut down a tree and bring the wood, and make a *Veena*

for the princess."

When he went to the forest, Ramayya searched for the spot where he had met the woman's apparition. The tree where she said she was living had come down with signs that it had died. So, he chose another tree and cut it down and took the wood home. He made a lovely *Veena* and himself took it to the princess, who paid a handsome price for it.

Mother: What did you learn in school today, Lakshmi?

Lakshmi: How to whisper without moving my lips.

A. KANESAN





LET US KNOW

How do trees get rings? What is their function?

- V. Gopal Ratnam, Visakhapatnam

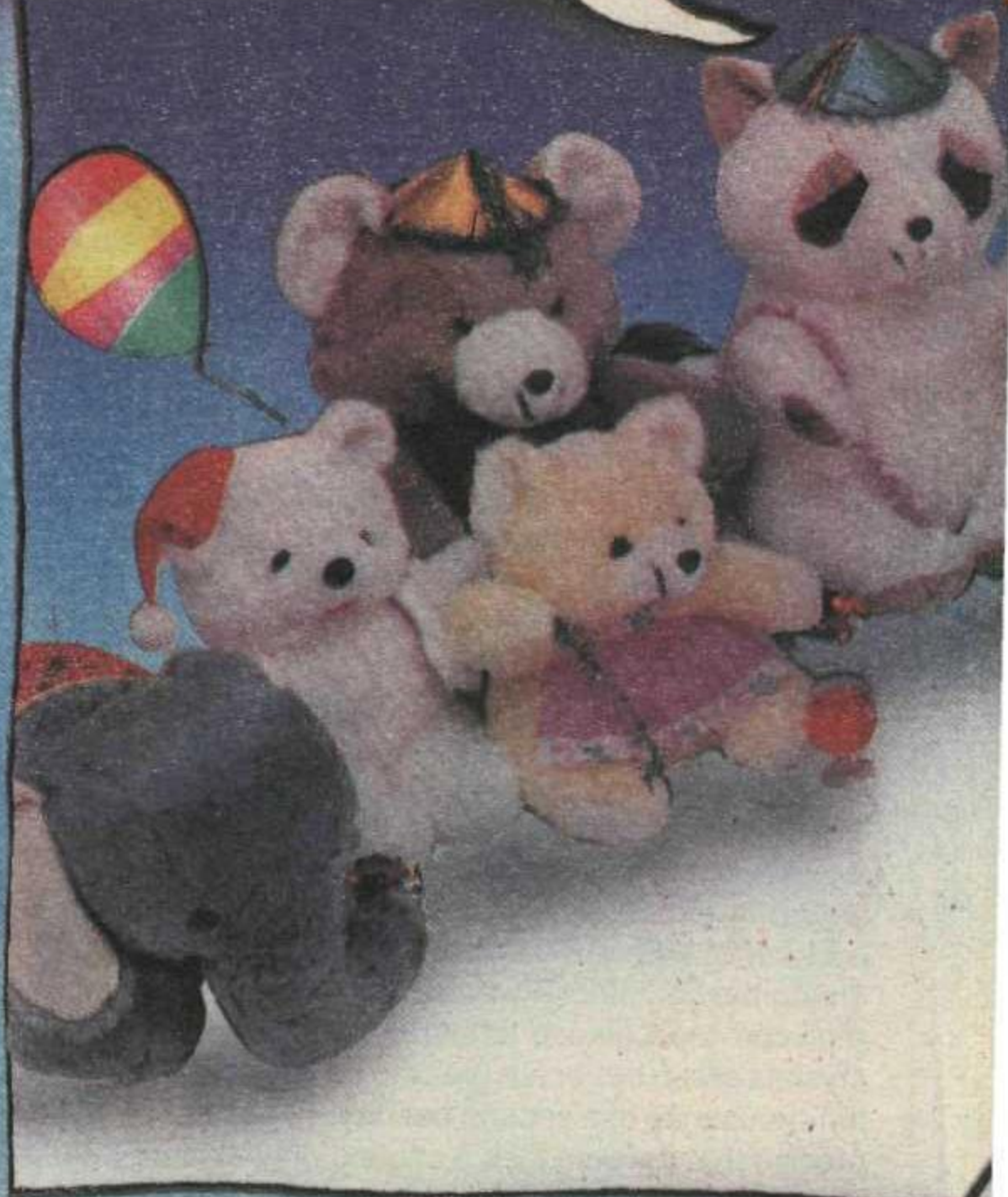
If you look at the cross-section of a tree, like when it has been cut, you will notice quite a few dark circles on the wood. In the centre are smaller circles or rings, which get wider as the tree grows. The older the tree, the larger the number of rings. Within the trunk is a ring of cells. As the tree grows, the cells increase in number. Those cells, produced during spring and summer, appear light. When the growth slows down during the colder climate, the wood hardens and the rings become darker. The dark rings mark the growth of the tree every year. The darker rings are generally counted for the number of years the tree has grown.

How does a clock or watch maintain accuracy?

- Sowmya Desai, Ahmedabad

Towards the middle of the 17th century, clocks with pendulums became popular. Christian Huygens made use of the theory of gravity on the pendulum to reduce the inaccuracy in clocks. However, the length of the pendulum expanded or contracted according to the changes in temperature. Then George Graham found a way to remedy the fault by adding a compensating device to the pendulum which checks the expansion and contraction during weather changes. The clocks would thus lose or gain only a single second during the course of a week or ten days. Then came the quartz crystal which replaced the balance wheel in watches and pendulums in clocks. Quartz crystals give a better accuracy to the time devices. They are accurate to within ten-thousands of a second per day. The latest invention – atomic clock – is so precise that it would lose a second only in three thousand years !

Say "Hello" to text books and friends
'Cause School days are here again
Have a great year and all the best
From Wobbit, Coon and the rest!





It's time to go back to school again. Time for text
books. Time for games. Time to meet old friends.
And make new ones. Time to start studying
again. Because there's so much to learn about
the world around you.

From all of us here at Chandamama, have a
great year in school. And remember to tell us
what you've learnt everyday, when you
come home from school !



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



G. Srinivasa Murthy



Purushottam Vagga

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 100/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The prize for February '94 goes to :-

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Maharashtra

The winning entry : "Majestic" - "Artistic"

PICKS FROM THE WISE

Work of genius are the first things in the world.

—John Keats

Whatever Fortune has placed on high, she lifts to throw it down again.

—Seneca

If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

—P.B. Shelly

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I remember the day we moved into our new home. The boys and girls on the block looked like they were having

'hazaar' fun. But no, they didn't
look too interested in me.

How do you walk up to a new gang and
make them your pals? Think...Think. So
I just chuck a Try-Me in my mouth...walk
my best tough-guy-walk and offer them a
handful of Try-Me - "Go ahead,
Try Me!" Yeah. I made
five new best
pals that day.



Try-Me!

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